THE

MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Our Theology: Does it Matter?

We recently received a letter from an English clergyman who before his ordination had done good service in the wide fields of the British Empire. He wrote:

> 'To be honest, theological arguments leave me cold. In India I was not greatly concerned whether a man was a Christian, a Hindu, a Mohammedan, Sikh or Buddhist. What concerned me was the effect which his religion had upon his character. How then can I raise any enthusiasm over the relative merits of Anglo-Catholicism, Fundamentalism or Modernism? I see in Christ the greatest example of goodness, beauty and truth, and that is enough for me.'

This, we are convinced, expresses the outlook and estimate of many high-principled Christian laymen, and it is fundamentally sound, but perhaps somewhat superficially expressed. The *Guardian* (Dec. 23) cites among the 'Dicta of the Week' one by General Sir Wyndham Deedes:

> 'The whole question of freedom, democracy, is ultimately . . . a theological question.'

The *odium theologicum* is detestable. The verbal hair-splittings of theologians when these verbal distinctions do not correspond to real distinctions only serve to irritate and repel truth-seekers. Yet, on the other hand, no one concerned with the moral char-

acter of his fellow-men, least of all the teacher of morals, can afford to ignore theological issues. Francis Bacon wrote:

> 'Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted: nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider.'

Similar advice may be given to those who argue about theology.

Whether there be a God, and above all what is His nature and what is man's relation to Him, are not only the most profound of questions, but on the answer given to them by human beings the character of the individual and the quality of his civilization must ultimately depend. Theological disputations do leave men of modern education and practical mind cold. But that is because the disputants too often are concerned with small issues, not with the great ones or with questions to which no secure or helpful answers can be obtained: too often they exhibit an obscurantist type of mind; belief in a series of assumptions which are discreditd; a method of reasoning which is prescientific. This, however, does not demonstrate the uselessness of theology, but the need of a better theology and better methods than are current among the adherents and exponents of many contemporary theologisms. Until we get our theology right we shall not get our religion and our morals right, and unless these are right we shall not get our civilization right, are the lessons which our present situation is setting us to re-learn.

The question, 'How then can I raise any enthusiasm over the relative merits of Anglo-Catholicism, Fundamentalism or Modernism?' is as though a patriotic Englishman should say: I love my country dearly; I am resolved to devote my life to its service; how then can I raise any enthusiasm for Unionist, Liberal or Labour policies? As a practical patriot he will find that he has got to support the method of one of the three when conflicting issues arise, although ready enough to admit on all other occasions that all three parties have a great deal in common. The method of Modernism is to stress the supreme importance of truth, freedom, tolerance and comprehensiveness in our church life, and to plead that our Christian creed should be so framed as not to exclude from the Church's membership and ministry any who see in Christ 'the greatest example of goodness, beauty and truth' and are resolved in their character and conduct to follow Him.

Politics, Democracy and Religion.

Professor Stanley Cook, Fellow of the British Academy, has spent many years of his life in the study of Biblical and Comparative Religion. Of late years he has been publishing his views on the practical application of the results of these studies and their bearing on the painful problems presented by our contemporary civilization. The breadth and depth of Professor Cook's learning entitle him to be heard with deference. Learned men are able, on occasions, to teach lessons to practical men whose range of knowledge is narrower. Francis Bacon, who possessed an extraordinary grasp of both the particular and the general, wrote :

> ' Expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one : but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned.'

This is why it is desirable in the interests of our Church policy that the majority of our Bench of Bishops should be learned men. Dr. Stanley Cook's view of our contemporary civilization and the supreme remedy for its evils is presented in the following significant letter published in the *Manchester Guardian* of December 2, 1938 :

> Amid all the discussions of the present situation one factor, the factor of religion, the one that has most made history in the past, has remained in the background. Yet that fundamental religious questions are involved in the world-wide unrest manifesting itself in so many social and political issues scarcely needs mention : they lie beneath the surface awaiting a settlement which cannot be reached by force or might. For the history of Christianity the birth of the ' German Christian ' Church in 1933 is quite as significant an event as the determined anti-religious policy of Communism during the last twenty years, and the religious, social, and other effects of the events in Germany and Russia upon the various Christian and Jewish communities have combined to introduce a new stage in the history of religion itself. Moreover, the familiar rivalries between the Roman Catholic and other sections of Christianity find parallels among other religions, and the differences between Jew and Moslem in the Near East and between Moslem and Hindu in the Middle East are but the more conspicuous of the rifts in an exacerbated world.
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> The very complexity and delicacy of the religious questions, indeed the very nature of religion itself, might seem to counsel a prudent silence and a quiet patience, but the whole trend of our national life and thought is as much opposed to the religious and other systems that confront us as these are to one another. Meanwhile, our inherited beliefs are being drastically modified by three independent lines of research : the greatly increased knowledge of man and the universe, the progress of Biblical criticism, and the study of the world's reli-

gions—that is, of what men have felt to be most real and true. Their combined effect has been to render antiquated and untenable much that has been handed down from the past, and to render premature and unstable the current theological syntheses of Communism and Fascism or Nazism.

Accordingly, we ourselves come in between a disappearing past and an as yet unborn future, and if we would pull our weight and make a helpful and enduring contribution, if we would lay the foundations of a new future, religion—that is, measured convictions of what is most vital and essential for humanity—must take its indispensable part. Biblical criticism to-day is profoundly affecting our age-long notions of the origin of the Jews and the nature of Judaism, and, since Christianity, too, is equally involved, it can be affirmed that upon the solution of the problems of Christianity itself rests the solution of the vexed Jewish problem, and not that problem alone. This is not to say that the fundamental simple tenets of religion which have sustained millions of individuals are being shaken—quite the contrary, in spite of the imaginings of many 'intellectuals'—but the spirit or soul of religion is claiming a re-embodiment, patched and repatched garments are falling to pieces, and along with them is disappearing much that enters into popular notions that guided—or misguided—our feelings.

A religion that is of real value and can command a reasoned respect is a unifying force: men become conscious of the objective principles that unite them despite their national, political, and other differences. Thus there can be no effective League of Nations unless there is the common recognition of sanctions transcending States and peoples. Even the question of colonies turns ultimately upon common agreement as to the treatment of native races by European Powers who can agree in recognizing their own responsibility to a Supreme Power.

The conflict between democratic and totalitarian or authoritarian systems is not due merely to the mistrust of the former for the latter: it is the legitimate recognition by the latter that the democracies are not facing the real problems, but, unwilling or unable to think out their ideological foundations, tend to be little more than an *ad hoc* assembly of 'antis.'

For us to pique ourselves upon our indifference to 'ideologies'—ghastly word!—is to ignore the connection between thought and action, between theory and practice. To despise others' sense of mission and destiny is to forget that precisely the sense of trusteeship and of responsibility to oneself and others has been the most powerful of all forces in men. But to find ourselves confronted by some effective 'ism' which we happen to repudiate is to receive the call to work out a better one, and our present fecklessness is likely to continue until men can construct a democracy—indeed, a Christian democracy—which will be without the fatal weaknesses of the Christianity and democracy of to-day.

Our malaise is due mainly to the barely conscious feeling that the deepest needs are not being satisfied: we are both unarmed and underfed. The world crisis is essentially a crisis in the history of religion. Man, as we sometimes see, has not wholly severed himself from nature and the brute, and the sub-human ruthlessness of nature shows itself when, through the decay of inherited patterns of life and thought, man is in danger of forgetting or losing all that has made the difference between himself and his animal kin.

> To-day's task is to reaffirm and restate man's humanity and his place in the universe, in the light of both science and religion, and these latter cannot be kept apart, since the great epochs of world history have a more than social or political significance. The compelling strength of any 'ism' which we fear or repudiate will be found to lie in the faith of its adherents that they are working as the instruments of a cause that far transcends the rivalries, conflicts, and crises that now disturb and distress us, and until democracy has built upon a stronger foundation it will continue to arouse the concern of its friends and the enmity of its foes.
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> No one who has followed your columns day by day during the last few weeks can fail to have been impressed by the general eagerness and anxiety to understand and cope with the present situation, but to one who has endeavoured to be a student of history and religion it seems clear that a long view must be taken if the situation is to be more truly diagnosed, and such a view demands a more earnest attention to the fundamental problems of religion.

To put it briefly, contemporary democratic civilization is in need of a religion which can provide it not only with moral and spiritual foundations, but also with moral and spiritual ideals and a growing apprehension of the methods by which alone these ideals can be progressively realized. Much of our modern democratic policy has been based upon ideals of popular education of the most superficial kind; upon economic equalitarianism which was satisfied to be materialistic; upon philanthropic humanitarianism which loved men's bodies but did not concern itself with satisfying their higher nature. The saying of Jesus, 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all things needful for this life shall be added unto you,' has been disregarded by the builders of our contemporary civilizations. First things have not been put first: parts have been substituted for wholes: many superficial generalizations have been presented as eternal and universal truth. The Christian Church has been far more to blame for this situation than the un-Christian world. The Archbishop of Canterbury's 'Recall to Religion' does not face the fundamentals of the existing situation, but only hovers over the *tohu-bohu* of its surface. It has certainly not said, 'Let there be light.'

Wanted: A New Religion?

Some years before the Great War a brilliant French writer, J. M. Guyau, wrote a book entitled *The Non-religion of the Future*. It was plain to the author that religion had had its day

and that the scientific view of the Universe had deprived religion both of credibility and of usefulness. In the great and dawning future when all humanity would dwell in the light and warmth of the rising sun of science, religion, like some pestilential miasma, would be for ever dissipated by its beams. Guyau's conclusion was an old one. He had been anticipated by Lucretius and his Greek master some two thousand years earlier.

The Bolshevists, who resolved by their 'No God' campaign to extirpate religion as the 'opiate of the people,' are in this matter less intelligent than the leaders of the French Revolution who sought to replace Roman Catholicism by the worship of the Goddess of Reason and Liberty. Almost within a decade, Chateaubriand's *Le Génie du Christianisme*, studied by Napoleon the Great, had prepared the way for the re-establishment of Christianity in France. The builders of states who think that religion can be left out of account may yet discover that 'the stone which the builders rejected is the head of the corner.' At any rate they will do well to bear the following facts in mind :

First, that the study of anthropology and ethnology indicates that religion has always and everywhere been characteristic of human communities.

Secondly, that religious psychology teaches that the human personality is possessed of religious emotions and faculties, and that if these be suppressed or perverted, psychological disaster ensues.

Thirdly, that the study of the evolution and characteristics of civilizations indicates that religion is the inner side of every civilization and is an important factor in contributing to a civilization its peculiar quality.

Fourthly, of all the existing religions of mankind—many of them much older than Christianity—the Christian religion possesses a promise and potency not shared by any other religion in the same degree.

Fifthly, there is as yet no existing form of the Christian religion which does not suffer from limitations, perversions, accretions and superstitions which mar and weaken and even thwart the primal truth and beauty and power of essential Christianity —'the truth as it is in Jesus.'

We in the West are awakening to our need of religion: we are becoming convinced that Materialism, Naturalism, Agnosticism, Humanism are insecure bases, whether for the individual life or for contemporary civilization. But what we have not yet realized is that the Christian religion can supply our need. The reason for this lack of perception is the unattractive and unconvincing forms in which, for the most part, contemporary Christianity presents itself. This leads us to feel that we need a new religion.

Israel Zangwill in his play, 'The Next Religion'—a play which the Censor refused to license—concludes it thus:

> HAL. The *next* religion? Before we've worked out the last? What have you found more beautiful or uplifting than the words of Christ? And this religion has the advantage of being already organized—it carries the inspiration and consecration of the centuries.
>
> STEPHEN. And their encrustation of error! And their petrifactions!
>
> HAL. Then vivify it, scour it, bring it back to the Founder. Perhaps Christ's own religion has never had a chance—perhaps *that's* the next religion.

Professor H. B. Swete warned his readers that 'the lure of primitivism' can be as deceptive as 'the lure of mediaevalism.' It is as hopeless as it is dangerous to seek to reproduce primitive Christianity in the twentieth century. That is the folly of Fundamentalism. Not 'back to Jesus' but 'forward in the Spirit of Christ' must be the Christian watchword of a victorious future.

To purgation must be added the ideal of enrichment: to loyalty, the ideal of enlarging experience. The Christian Church has too often created a false antithesis between a world-renouncing Christianity and a world-embracing Christianity. The right ideal is a world-consecrating Christianity—a Christianity which seeks to baptize into Christ all human life—not only the religion and ethics, but also the arts and sciences, the economics and politics of mankind. Like the Latin poet, it must count nothing human as alien.

SUBSCRIPTION TO THE LETTER OR LOYALTY TO THE SPIRIT?

The *Guardian* of December 2 concluded a scholarly treatment of the Thirty-nine Articles thus:

> 'Whether the Articles should be dropped or amended is a matter for debate. Undoubtedly in places they date, admittedly in places they are deliberately ambiguous: they are an unsatisfactory statement for

native Churches which know nothing of Western European sixteenth-century controversies. Careful revision would meet some of these difficulties, and certainly the custom which has grown up of binding them with the Prayer-book might well cease. For they can and do cause much misunderstanding in minds untrained in theology and history. But some statement presumably there must be which shows plainly the sense in which the Church of England understands the Catholic Faith of Christendom.'

This pronouncement secured the following masterly statement by Mr. Micklewright, published in the *Guardian* of December 9 :

The excellent article in last week's issue of the *Guardian* overlooks one important contribution to the discussion, the early pamphlet of F. D. Maurice, *Subscription No Bondage*. In many ways, it 'dates' when considered in the light of to-day. Maurice had an almost uncritical reverence for the sixteenth century which few would now share. But his thesis is still of importance. An accepted tradition, liberally interpreted, is more likely to make a true theological inclusiveness than is some rewritten standard of orthodoxy which would bear all the marks of an exclusiveness arising from current controversy.

Anglicanism has reached a stage when some form of doctrinal report has become an absolute necessity in order to assess the course which varying shades of theology have taken. It is clear that nobody who has really made a study of the historical evidences can consent to be bound down in formulating his conclusions by historical and philosophical judgments which are the outcome of the mental climate of the first, fourth, sixteenth, or any other century. It is a matter of urgency that a large measure of toleration should be accorded in matters of theological speculation and doctrine. But it is highly unlikely that this could come about by a rewriting of the Articles. Who is to undertake the task? It would be no easy matter to evolve a document which should prove satisfying to the Catholic Advisory Council, Modernists, and Evangelical Protestants, yet each belongs historically to the Church of England. The very impossibility of the task proves the futility of attempting to secure an exact intellectual dogmatic agreement.

The present situation does, in spite of its many shortcomings, give one cause for satisfaction. The Act of 1865 has made it clear that subscription is to the spirit of the Articles. It ceases to be a bondage when it is regarded as an assent to the historical principles of Anglicanism. Let the Articles bear for the subscriber, when their exact details are considered, the meaning which they bore for Newman in Tract XC, or for Dean Stanley, it still remains true that this exact closeness of definition is not the question that is asked of him in giving assent. The cleric subscribing is asked to adhere to the spirit of Anglicanism, a far wider matter which carries consideration beyond any outward form to the inwardness of religion. A spirit of a creed does not belong to the realm of dogma in the narrower sense, but to that religious experience which dogma seeks to intellectualize.

The present dogmatic disputes are of value in calling attention to this fact. Religious communion is a spiritual matter. It is impossible to settle it in the terms of a *credo*, whether Catholic or Protestant, when the symbol has been allowed to become a reality and a means of exclusion. The existing statements of faith have acquired a traditional

value. Let them be retained by all means, but let it be freely acknowledged that assent is concerned with the spirit rather than with the letter, and that creeds exist as attempting in limited and finite terms to set forth the atmosphere of unity resulting from the acknowledgment of the validity of the religious experience of infinite truth which they are seeking to reduce to terms. Viewed from such an angle, any difficulties associated with the Thirty-nine Articles melt away. But, if Anglicanism should ever pass over to the other extreme and should once again press the demand for exactness of intellectual agreement with their every phrase, it will have committed an act of schism, for it will have introduced a wilful narrowing of the boundaries of catholicity. At that stage, some of us would have to follow the example of another great Victorian religious teacher whom your article might have mentioned, Dr. Stopford Brooke, and seek a spiritual home elsewhere.

It is possible for all clergymen who have been rightly instructed in the purpose and meaning of subscription and are loyal to the fundamental principles of the English Church to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles conscientiously. What is needed to-day is not a revision of the Thirty-nine Articles, but a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the significance of clerical subscription. It is here that the remedy lies.

If there be a real desire on the part of our Church authorities to relieve the scruples of ordinands, let them begin by altering the form of the interrogation and answer prescribed in the Ordering of Deacons: 'Do you unfeignedly believe all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament? I do believe them.' An alteration which had the support of all parties in the Church was made in the *Deposited Book* of 1928. Why should not our authorities, if sensitive for the consciences of ordinands, take immediate steps to secure this much-needed reform?

'Confused Noise Without.'

Mr. E. M. Forster in his wireless talk, 'The Books of 1938,' published in the *Listener* (December 29), selected the Noyes case as one of the two most significant of the year's 'fusses' in the world of literature. To English Modernists the case has perhaps an added interest since Lord Charnwood, a Vice-President of the Modern Churchmen's Union, was invited by Mr. Noyes to give his opinion upon the case. This was set forth in the following letter to the *Times* of August 10, 1938:

Sir,—The conflict between freedom and tyranny which now extends over so much of Europe, concerns, of course, matters even more vital

than political institutions. Englishmen of all parties, and till yesterday I would have said of all creeds, stand solid on the fundamental issue which is at stake. During this conflict members of the Roman Catholic Church, being a religious minority in Russia, have met with especially sanguinary treatment there; and in Germany they have since stood in the forefront of resistance to a worship of worldly power more odious than the simple and puerile Atheism of the Bolshevists.

Throughout all this time members of other Churches and men of goodwill but of no particular Church have admired the consistency with which leading Roman Catholics, and not least the Pope himself, have spoken out not merely for their own community, but on behalf of religious toleration generally.

It will thus be a disaster if the Church of Rome now officially declares itself (like the Nazis and the Bolshevists) an enemy of tolerance as such; and we can all see how grievous a strain will be imposed on simple Roman Catholic people whom we know in this country, and on great numbers like them in America and elsewhere, if a concealed power in Rome compels them to appear in this position. Yet nothing short of this can be the aim of the high authorities at the Vatican who have lately singled out Mr. Alfred Noyes's book on Voltaire as 'worthy of condemnation.'

I have learnt the facts to which I call your attention only because competent guides in his own Church advised Mr. Noyes to obtain the opinion of a 'Non-Catholic layman' upon his book. I must explain them fully, so that their wide significance may be clear.

Since he joined the Church of Rome Mr. Noyes has consecrated his ability as a writer and a poet to the service above all of the faith which he has espoused. Of his very powerful and original book, *The Unknown God*, it is enough to recall that it is wholly devoted to showing how the fundamental assumptions of the great masters of physical science lead logically to belief in God, and is wholly unconcerned with any further doctrinal issue or with such controversies as are associated with the name of Modernism. It can have angered none except such as disbelieve in God.

Now, if his later work on Voltaire were any more closely concerned with distinctive doctrines of the Church of Rome, condemnation passed upon it by authorities of that Church would be no business of any outsider. But the fact, patent to any intelligent person who reads the book attentively, is that it too is wholly unconcerned with such questions. Apart from mere biographical details and purely literary criticism, the whole book can be summed up under three heads:

(1) It demolishes the old tradition by which mere infidelity could claim support or sympathy from the genius of Voltaire. (2) It demolishes no less the spiteful suggestions once made that Voltaire was insincere in the actions by which from time to time he evinced his lingering attachment to the faith and to the Church in which he was brought up. (3) It gives an inspiring account of Voltaire's long-sustained and courageous fight against atrocious acts of intolerance which no man defends to-day, and for which the responsibility lay not with Rome but with the local Gallican authorities.

This advocacy of religious toleration, in the course of which Voltaire was roused to language of religion which no Christian can read without emotion, is boldly declared by Mr. Noyes to have been a service to the Christian faith and to the Church — which to Mr. Noyes

means the Church of Rome. In not one line of the book does he deny that Voltaire was unorthodox, and in not one line does he defend any opinion of Voltaire's which Roman authority has hitherto declared unorthodox. To every reader of the book who now learns that it has been censured by the Holy Office it must be unhappily plain that the persons who procured this decision have been angered by Mr. Noyes's zeal for the toleration of beliefs which he does not himself hold.

But the Holy Office has decreed 'that the author should be informed that the book is found worthy of condemnation,' though such condemnation may be avoided on two conditions—namely, his withdrawing so far as he can all copies of it from circulation, and his writing 'something that will be equivalent to a reparation.' The publishers of the book have been 'severely warned,' and—for their business lies almost wholly in the publication of approved Roman Catholic works—have actually been compelled to suppress, at considerable loss, a new edition which was ready. A French writer who has with great labour completed a translation of it has also been compelled to suppress his translation, and his intending publishers have been falsely told by somebody that this was done because the author himself desired it for personal reasons. A large edition in America has also been withdrawn. Meanwhile the author has never been told what are the errors in his book which require its suppression and some 'equivalent to a reparation' from him. He has been anxious to obtain this information from the Holy Office, and stands ready to correct what is shown to be erroneous. Further than this no honest man could go. But he is advised that he can only obtain this information, if at all, by a letter which announces his previous withdrawal of all editions of the work under his control, and by implication his acknowledgment of error. The long and short of this is that very effective steps have already been taken towards the suppression of the book, and that a public condemnation (painful and humiliating to one of his faith) hangs over the head of its author unless he recants his errors without knowing what his errors are.

I am not writing from special interest in one book, though I happen to think it an important contribution to literature, nor because of petty injustice done to an author who certainly takes no interest in himself as a victim of persecution. But if this be the final decision of the Roman Church in this matter, what follows? Henceforward, wherever the Roman Church may be subjected to harsh measures of repression, the Protestant, the Agnostic, the Atheist can still protest on its behalf in the name of freedom, of justice, and of common humanity; but the mouth of the Roman Catholic who would make such an appeal will by authority have been stopped.

Yours truly,

CHARNWOOD.

This letter introduced a long correspondence which provided many interesting comments but added no relevant facts to Lord Charnwood's statement.

On September 5, the *Times* published under the heading 'A Satisfactory Conclusion' a letter by Mr. Noyes which stated that:

'The former publisher has now surrendered the book—"for a proper consideration"—to one of the foremost neutral firms, which is announcing a re-issue in the next day or two.'

In the same letter Mr. Noyes also stated that it had been 'explained' to him by Cardinal Hinsley that no errors on the ground of 'faith and morals' had yet been found in his book, and that

> 'most of the trouble had arisen from an official mistranslation of the Decree from the Supreme Congregation which was sent to him in English. It was agreed that possibly there were similar accidents in the translation of passages from my book into Italian.'

Mr. Noyes triumphantly concluded his letter with the words:

> 'This affair has nothing whatever to do with religion: it was simply a question of governmental procedure.
>
> The Divine Institution is not diminished—it can only grow in stature—by substituting for the "Ministration of Condemnation" the "Ministration of Justice."'

Mr. E. M. Forster congratulates Mr. Noyes 'for having won a battle for British freedom,' and we also do the same. We wish that we could also congratulate Mr. Noyes on having won a victory for Christian freedom in the Roman Church; but in that Church where Mr. Noyes is a unit, not in the *ecclesia docens* but in the *ecclesia discens*, such a victory is impossible for a layman.

Some readers will dismiss the Noyes case with a comment that the Roman Church would do well, if she is not to lose prestige, to be more careful in selecting competent officials to translate authoritative documents, but other readers will question how a Church which can err in the lesser matter of linguistic translation can yet be infallible in the greater matter of Christian Faith and Morals. To substitute, under public protest, the 'Ministration of Justice' for the 'Ministration of Condemnation' is easily enough understood when done by a Church professing fallibility (Edmund Burke's description of the Church of England), but it is difficult to explain in the case of the Church which professes infallibility. However, we have no doubt at all that Cardinal Hinsley is equal to 'explaining' this—at least to the satisfaction of Roman Catholic laymen.

DANTE AND THE WORLD TO-DAY*

By the Rev. L. E. Elliott-Binns, D.D., Hulsean Lecturer 1921-22.

WHEN I began the preparation of this lecture the shadow of a great war lay across our land; and, though the cloud has lifted, the thought of war still looms large. In these circumstances we need to be reminded that war is not an isolated evil; it is the culminating horror in a society which is striving to live its life apart from God. It may be that we in the West, as some good people are constantly assuring us, are suffering the inevitable retribution for the Reformation; and that our present disquiet is the fruit of the failure, both moral and social, of Protestantism. My own opinion, for what it is worth, is that we have reached the end of that stage of history which was ushered in by the Renaissance of the fourteenth century, and are awaiting the release of new vital impulses to set humanity once again upon its upward way. Such impulses, I need scarcely add, must not be purely intellectual, they must also be spiritual; a new Reformation, as well as a new Renaissance.

Looking at the world around us we can discern a number of characteristics which, though balanced by others that are more admirable, cannot but fail to arouse concern, if not alarm, in the minds of those who still have at heart the welfare of humanity and the honour of God. It will be useful to pass some of them in review before going on to consider the ways in which Dante can give us help in remedying them. The most conspicuous is, I suppose, the lack, among those who do not acknowledge the claims of religion, of fixed standards and definite ideals. The fact is that old sanctions are no longer regarded as binding, or even as helpful; that values are continually changing; that many are content, so far as moral questions are concerned, to live from hand to mouth, relying on the haphazard guidance of a favourite newspaper or the broadcast of some popular and self-appointed prophet. Is it very surprising if such a state of

* The Bishop Gore Memorial Lecture delivered in Westminster Abbey on November 18, 1938.

affairs should lead to much impatience, and tend to make the age critical rather than constructive? Stability, after all, is a prerequisite for construction.

Education, we pride ourselves, is universal in Britain. Its effects, however, are but superficial. Knowledge, it must be remembered, only makes people wise if what they are taught has some formative influence. It certainly has failed, as any genuine culture would not have done, to provide a barrier against sentimental views of life. Such views abound (perhaps by way of reaction against the mechanization of life) and are to be seen in the fostering of vague aspirations which enervate instead of bracing the soul, and in the substitution of emotion for effort. Turning to the relations between the sexes we find much that is unhealthy and romantic in a bad sense. This tendency, fed by the screen and much popular fiction, if allowed to increase, may well seriously undermine family life; and we have yet to find a substitute for the family as the basis of any sane and stable society.

Sentimentality is naturally associated with softness of fibre. The multitude of inventions has made life easy, and even luxurious, for an infinitely larger number of people than ever before. This has led to the adoption of a material scale of values; and many earnest social reformers seem to imagine that greater comfort and more leisure will bring their own reward in higher virtue and increased godliness. This phase is, however, already passing; it follows on the decline of the belief in the inevitable improvement of mankind. This very comforting doctrine helped our fathers over many a bad stretch of country; and, in their complacency, they could congratulate themselves on being in advance of all previous ages, and anticipate the coming of future generations still more advanced, as the divinely ordered plan for the progress of the race was gradually unfolded. With Tennyson they could sing:

> 'Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day,
> Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.'

Such views can no longer be held. And it is for our profit to realise it; for their abandonment strikes a heavy blow at the dangerously optimistic theory that evil is but undeveloped good, and that mankind is capable, without assistance, of outgrowing its bad habits.

A further characteristic is the craving for security, for some citadel and safe resting place for body and mind alike. 'To be invulnerable is what all men desire,' writes Charles Morgan in *The Fountain*. Security absolute is impossible; but there is the method known as 'escape,' by which life and its problems are, for a time, left behind. Many people manage in some measure to attain it, chiefly by filling up their leisure moments with assiduous attendance at the local cinema, or by means of various forms of gambling. Their immunity, however, is but forgetfulness, and lies pathetically open to such shocks as sickness or loss of employment. Even religion is cultivated by some as a way of escape, thus vindicating the Marxist taunt that it is 'dope.' Religion, that was meant to be not a way of escaping life and its problems, but a means of mastering them!

Religion, in any case, seems to mean much less in the life even of this country than at any time since the coming of the Methodist Revival in the middle of the eighteenth century. There is no open opposition, as in some countries, where attacks on Christianity are but one symptom of a harking back to barbarism; but rather a cynical ignoring of the Church which is quite as disquieting. And it is disquieting because to a very considerable degree it is justified. In support of this I will quote the words of one of the greatest of contemporary Christian leaders and thinkers, Dr. J. H. Oldham. In his well-known book *Christianity and the Race Problem*, published in 1924, he has the following passage:

> 'The pronouncements made by ecclesiastical bodies on social and moral questions are too often . . . the utterance of pious platitudes without knowledge and thought behind them, and practical men who know that only by hard and sustained thinking can a way be found through the perplexities and enigmas of modern life are apt in consequence to regard the Church as an influence that may safely be ignored.'

That condemnation applies just as surely to-day as fourteen years ago, and it will continue to apply so long as the Church's thinking has so largely to be done by men whose qualifications for their positions of leadership are practical rather than intellectual. The few among the Church's rulers who possess the requisite abilities and training are often so immersed in administration that they come to their tremendous task with tired brains and quite inadequate knowledge.

The decay of religion in this country is, however, a subject upon which it is dangerous to make sweeping generalizations, especially in a building which enshrined the Coronation and in view of the undoubted popularity of the religious ministrations of the B.B.C. The truth probably is that in religion, as in other spheres, we are sentimental; willing enough to enjoy the emotions which religion can arouse, but decidedly averse to committing ourselves, or accepting the discipline which such a pledge would involve. Many who are genuinely religious 'have no use,' as they would say, for the Church or for organized religion in any of its multitudinous forms. But that is no new phenomenon; the early Church had its Montanists, and, as Gore has written,

> 'The spiritually-minded of all ages have tended to find the visible Church a very troubled and imperfect home.' [1]

Looking over a wider field than is afforded by our own island, we find that in some countries substitutes for God are actually being provided. In the Totalitarian States the State itself, with but a thin disguise, stands in His room, and not content with claiming the things that are Caesar's, claims also the things that are God's. God, if recognized at all, is definitely subordinated to national or racial needs; He is an instrument of policy rather than an unquestioned Ruler and Guide. But whilst the populace require substitutes for God, there are intellectuals who seem to welcome the prospect of His disappearance, and, like Mr. Julian Huxley, attempt to devise a religion in which He finds no place. Others, the late Professor Alexander, for example, think that the Almighty, instead of being about to depart, has not yet appeared upon the scene.

But the question must be faced. Why does religion no longer make its old appeal? It may be that, for the moment, it is crowded out by a search, at times almost frenzied, after wealth and pleasure, and that disillusionment may drive men back once more to God. Again, it may be that there is intellectual dissatisfaction, a revolt against what we call Fundamentalism. When I delivered my Hulsean Lectures some seventeen years ago I ventured to suggest that much of the unsettlement of those days was due to the delay in making an intellectual adjustment,[2] and I still feel this to be true. But it does not explain everything.

[1] *Lux Mundi*, p. 243.

[2] *Erasmus the Reformer*, p. 27.

After all, few outside the universities and certain narrow coteries live their lives on an intellectual plane. Religion only fails, of this I am convinced, when it is no longer capable of meeting the emotional and moral needs of the people.

In politics, the novel thing about our era is the Totalitarian State, with its claim to dominate the intellectual and spiritual, as well as the other activities of its members. The weakness of this form of political organization is its tendency entirely to subordinate the individual to the community, a procedure which travesties the Christian conception of the relations of God and man, for it is to God alone that such submission can ever legitimately be rendered. Moreover, its ultimate effect must surely be still further to encourage the mechanization of life, to extend mass production from machines to men. The Totalitarian State, however, has great achievements to its credit, especially in the economic sphere, and we must not allow prejudice to blind us to them. The nineteenth century was the golden age of Democracy; it may well be that the twentieth will be that of the Totalitarian State in some form or other. Certainly the Church should not be too eager to enrol itself under the banner of Democracy. It may seem to promise greater freedom, but the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people might provide as bitter a tyranny as that of any dictator.

The mechanization of life, to which I referred a moment ago, has had strange repercussions. Even art and literature have been affected by it. That every age needs to find its own forms of self-expression would be generally admitted; but such forms as have so far emerged seem almost self-destructive. Jazz, if I may be allowed an indiscreet digression, is doubtless an appropriate noise for an age of machinery; whether it has any right to be included in the category of music is quite another matter. In literature, also, some of our poets — poets too with considerable gifts — have gone so far as to claim that the machine, with its virile life, is more worthy of song than the placid subjects which engaged the minds of the earlier bards. Mr. John Drinkwater, just before his lamented death, protested against such exaggeration.

> 'Which of the new prophets,' he asked, 'can explain how in any sense or at any time a host of golden daffodils is a less suitable theme

for poetry than a blast-furnace? . . . In terms of poetry, modern machinery is no more significant of life than a primrose or a milkpail.' [3]

After this review of the world to-day, let us now cast our imaginations back over more than six centuries to the world in which Dante lived and suffered. That world, even if we disregard the fact that no Copernicus had yet arisen to open up the prospect of a boundless universe, was a small world. In practice it was confined to Western Europe, although the existence of the Eastern Empire was recognized, and only a few years before our poet was born Mongol hordes from the distant steppes of Northern Asia had forced their way almost to the heart of the West, a terrible reminder that the world held dangers and possibilities to which men in general chose to shut their eyes.

The age was one of beauty and creativeness and its achievements in art and literature were germinal, for they contained within them the promise of still greater things to come. In scholarship the new universities were happily launched on their way, and the schoolmen had set their hands to the stupendous task of adjusting religion to the knowledge of their age, a task which has again become urgent in our own. In the world of religion, even if the Crusades had just come to an abortive end, the followers of Dominic and Francis were bringing back some savour of earlier purity and zeal.

It was the age, too, of chivalry and romance, but with a very low ideal of the relations between the sexes. Marriage was mainly a business matter in which the high contracting parties were hardly consulted, and so romantic love was almost invariably illicit — the love for the wife of another, as in the moving story of Paolo and Francesco.[4] Dante did indeed spiritualize his love for Beatrice, but in doing so he was no true representative of his times.

Viewed superficially the world was very different from that in which we live. Human nature, however, changes but little, and men and women were inspired then as now by very similar hopes and aspirations; they were likewise tormented by similar fears and temptations. Society was organized into a single system, based ostensibly on religious sanctions. There was a single

[3] *English Poetry: an Unfinished History*, p. 10.

[4] See *Inferno* V, 73*ff*.

Church — in the West at least; there was a single Empire — though certain countries, our own amongst them, stood outside it; there was a single language understood by scholars everywhere. Divisions then, to use a spatial metaphor, were horizontal and not, as now, perpendicular; not between nations and races, but between different layers in society.

The stability of society, however, was deceptive, since the basis on which it rested, although accepted in theory, was often ignored in practice. The Middle Ages, be it remembered, were very inconsistent; they formed a period in which men combined the profession of lofty ideals with the most unworthy lives. But, deluded by self-complacency and comfort, let us not be too severe in our judgment, since our own comparative success is due only to our being content with more modest aims. The Middle Ages were not comfortable, they were not complacent; men lived restlessly, and dangerously, and the fierce cruelties in which often enough they indulged were but one manifestation of unsatisfied longings for things beyond their attaining.

When Dante was still a child the rivalry between the Papacy and the Empire had just ended in the victory of the former. But in order to gain it French help had been summoned, and so the door was opened to the growing influence of the House of Capet — 'the evil tree which overshadows all Christian lands,' as Dante called it.[5] The fall of the Empire was but the prelude to the humiliation of Boniface VIII and the Babylonish captivity of Avignon.

What, we may now ask, were the thoughts which came to Dante as, in his own magnificent phrase, he 'kept vigil for the good of the world'?[6] And how far are they available for the solution of our own problems? What, for example, would have been his attitude towards those who lack ideals and definite standards, those whose views of life are materialistic and sentimental? What would have been his opinion of the Totalitarian State with its invasion of the sphere of religion and its threat to individual freedom, and what of the mechanization of life?

I think the best way of answering these questions is not to take them in detail, but by an independent exposition of Dante's

[5] *Purgatorio* XX, 43*f*.

[6] *De Monarchia*, i, 1.

point of view to provide an antidote for much that is harmful in our present way of life. A little thought will enable you to apply his principles for yourselves. These principles are to be found scattered up and down his great poem, but for a systematic treatment, especially of the political aspect of the times, we must turn to the *De Monarchia*, a work which has a pathetic note, for it expounds his doctrine that the Empire was to be the saviour of society, when for all practical purposes it was already defunct. What Dante hailed as the dawn of a new day of promise was in reality the twilight of an endless night.

The key to the political riddle of the universe Dante found in the conviction that God had chosen the Roman people to rule the world. That rule was now divided between the Pope, who was Rome's bishop, and the Emperor, whom he regarded as the successor of Augustus. Thus Empire and Papacy alike were divine institutions, each with its own separate function. It is important to remember that for Dante the Empire was equally divine with the Papacy, and the Emperor as well fitted as the Pope to be the mouthpiece of God. He held, moreover, that the authority of the Emperor came to him direct, without the intervention of any human mediator. He would certainly have had little sympathy with any theory which suggested that rulers derived their power from the governed, or were in any way responsible to them for its exercise. In Dante's eyes they were responsible to God alone.

Church and State, to adopt terms more useful than Papacy and Empire, had each its separate function and sphere. The Church, indeed, since it has to do with the spiritual side of man's being, has the higher function; but it must not on that account attempt to control the State or invade its legitimate sphere. Dante held that the disasters of his time were due to forgetfulness of this principle. 'Rome,' he cried,

> 'Was wont to boast two suns, whose several beams
> Cast light on either way, the world's and God's.
> One since hath quenched the other: and the sword
> Is grafted on the crook; and so conjoined
> Each must perforce decline to worse, unawed
> By fear of other.'[7]

The function of the Empire merits some elaboration. It was

[7] *Purgatorio* XVI, 104*ff*.

to bring in the reign of justice and peace on a universal scale. Dante was a strong patriot, one of the first indeed to recognize the need for a united Italy, but he was no nationalist in the narrow sense and his ideal civilization was at least European in its extent. Universal peace is a necessity if the goal of human endeavour is to be attained,[8] and to live in peace is mankind's highest boon.[9] To make it actual, justice is necessary. Now the great enemy of justice is greed, since strife and conflict come from the pursuit of material things. These, as Virgil explains,[10] diminish by being shared; but spiritual things, such as love and joy, increase by being shared, so that souls in Purgatory can rejoice when the time comes for one of their number to ascend to Paradise even if they themselves are left behind.

Dante, although he had an ardent desire for peace, was no pacifist. He recognized only too clearly that 'peace must wrench her chaplet from the teeth of war.' Hence his calling upon Henry VII to invade Italy, and his praise for the conquests of the Roman people which, so he believed, prepared for the coming of Christ. But it should not be overlooked that for him Rome's highest achievement was not conquest, but the establishment of law. Dante saw the typical Roman, not in Caesar, but in Justinian.[11] Such an attitude followed upon his conception of peace, which had nothing negative about it, since it consisted not in the mere absence of war and tumult, but in positive fulness and realization. Lasting peace, however, can only come when men are set on doing the will of God. It is a mark of Paradise that the slightest deviation from that will has become inconceivable.[12] In this connexion it is worthy of note that Dante showed his common sense by admitting that the will of God, since it is 'invisible,' is not always clearly to be discerned, and that we must be content with that degree of certainty that the nature of the case allows.[13]

To a casual reader the *De Monarchia* might seem to favour a system of dictatorship. Dante undoubtedly saw that unity of direction is needful for the carrying out of collective undertakings,[14] but the only dictator whom he would have recognized

[8] *De Monarchia*, i, 4.
[9] *Op. cit.* i, 11.
[10] *Purgatorio* XV.
[11] *Paradiso* VI.
[12] *Paradiso* III, 70*ff.*
[13] *De Monarchia*, ii, 2.

was an emperor ruling as God's representative and in order that men might have freedom.[15] Since he insists that men are only free when they are allowed to seek the goal of their own nature and are not compelled to serve some other end,[16] the Totalitarian State seems definitely to be ruled out.

Freedom, like peace, is a positive and not a negative conception. It certainly does not consist in the absence of restraint, as though it were a kind of no-man's-land in which no writ was allowed to run. Freedom comes with the willing acceptance of legitimate authority, and finds its highest expression in common self-dedication to a noble ideal. It is exactly expressed in the phrase in the Collect, a phrase which at first sight seems self-contradictory, *whose service is perfect freedom*. Thus, though it may sound paradoxical, an ardent Fascist may enjoy greater freedom than a British working man who is an unwilling member of a Trades Union, though his membership of such an organization may be for his actual benefit.

Turning to another aspect of freedom, we find that Dante constantly regards man as a free, moral personality capable of fashioning his own destiny. Freedom of the will is, indeed, God's greatest gift to mankind.[17]

The acceptance of the doctrine that man's highest good stands in doing the will of God has one important consequence; it follows that the supreme evil is not suffering, but that disobedience which religion calls sin. This comes out in the contrast between the attitude of souls in Hell and of those in Purgatory.

> 'In hell,' writes Mr. T. S. Eliot, 'the torment arises from the very nature of the damned themselves; they writhe in the torment of their own perpetually perverted nature. In purgatory the torment of flame is deliberately and consciously accepted by the penitent.'[18]

The lesson that sin, and not suffering, is the final evil is one that we need desperately to learn to-day. Humanitarian thought of the last century looked upon suffering and discomfort of any kind as the worst evils, and religion became infected with the same idea. But to think of pain as the supreme evil is, as Canon Quick has reminded us,[19] not Christianity but Buddhism, where

[14] *Op. cit.* i, 5. [15] *Op. cit.* i, 12.

[16] *Op. cit.* i, 13. The willing acceptance of the rule of a Totalitarian State might, however, enable them to fulfil their nature.

[17] *Paradiso* V, 19*ff*. [18] *Dante*, p. 39.

the ultimate goal is extinction, not the fulness of life promised in the Gospel. Forgetfulness of this has made much religious teaching nerveless and ineffective, and if the Church is to take again its rightful place it must learn the lesson afresh and add a new note of sternness and of warfare.

This, you may say, is a pessimistic point of view. That is true; and the Church when it has been most faithful has always been regarded as pessimistic by believers in progress, because it has always insisted that human nature is not essentially good, that man is a fallen creature, and in sore need of redemption. It may be pessimism, but it is certainly not despair; for the Church, like Dante, has faith in God, and can ask, whilst contemplating the sin and misery of the world,

> 'Are they just eyes turned elsewhere, or is this
> A preparation, in the wondrous depth
> Of thy sage counsel made, for some good end,
> Entirely from the reach of thought cut off?' [20]

Towards the end of his life Gore wrote a volume in the Home University series, entitled *Jesus of Nazareth*. A sentence from it will provide an approach to the final, and perhaps the most vital, article of Dante's teaching which I propose to notice. The sentence goes as follows:

> 'In the long run what any society is to become will depend on what it believes or disbelieves about eternal things.' [21]

It is a perilous weakness in our Western thought, even when it is definitely religious, that it has but a feeble grasp of eternal things. Christianity itself is valued, not so much for the light it sheds upon ultimate problems, as for its help in daily life. Dante, with fuller insight, would doubtless tell us that even the problems of daily life cannot be solved if considered merely from an earthly standpoint; they must be seen in the light of heaven. Religion, whilst keeping its feet firmly planted on the earth, must be other-worldly; and man must realize that his little life is set against the background of eternity. After all, if we accept the will of God as the controlling force of our lives, such an orientation of the mind and soul must surely follow. For as

[19] *Doctrines of the Creed*, pp. 194*f*.
[20] *Purgatorio* VI, 120*ff*.
[21] *Op. cit.* p. 250.

Canon Barry has said :

> 'No ethic of which the guiding motive is conformity to God's holy will can find its goals in this world of time.' [22]

Life is to be lived in the light of a divine vision, the foretaste of which can be enjoyed here but whose full fruition lies beyond the gates of death.

Such I believe to be the main heads of Dante's teaching which have durable significance for our own age and those beyond it. We may agree with them or we may not; in either case they should stimulate our thinking and, to quote Gore once again, help to

> 'divert an anxious mind from problems which it cannot solve . . . and fix it on the cardinal truths of our religion.' [23]

THE USE AND ABUSE OF SYMBOLISM

By the Rev. G. L. H. Harvey, M.A., editor of *The Church and the Twentieth Century.*

THE Roman Church knew what it was about when, some quarter of a century ago, it declared war on Modernism. There was a real danger that the extreme men would make good their claim to dissolve all dogma into symbolism.

But even the most radical Roman Modernists might have claimed, with considerable justification, that they had a rightful place in their Church, that in fact they were the legitimate descendants of the great Schoolmen. Thomas Aquinas' theory of Analogy could, without distortion, be restated in the language of symbolism. It affirmed that we do not know what the love, goodness, and wisdom of God connote. The most we can say is that what human love, goodness, and wisdom are to man, such are divine love, goodness, and wisdom to God. In other words, the human qualities are little if any more than symbols of the corresponding divine qualities. Then the theory of Analogy goes on to add that God does not really possess a plurality of attributes but that His attributes are in fact identical with His Being. It is a theory hard to understand, and in his recent book on religious symbolism [1] Dr. Edwyn Bevan confesses that he

[22] *The Relevance of Christianity*, p. 305. [23] *Lux Mundi*, p. xiii.

[1] *Symbolism and Belief.* By Edwyn Bevan. (Published by George Allen and Unwin Ltd. Price 15*s.* net.)

himself is unable to make sense of it. If you press the distinction between the attributes of God and the corresponding attributes of man as far as Aquinas is disposed to press it, you reach a position hardly distinguishable from theological agnosticism. You are using symbolic language about the attributes of the Deity, and between the language and the reality which it symbolizes the connexion is tenuous in the extreme.

The learned Dominican theologian, Father Sertillanges, who holds the Chair of Philosophy in the Catholic University of Paris, writes of the theory of Analogy :

> 'Quite a negative position, it will be seen, as far as any real definition goes. You learn nothing at all about God, considered in Himself. You refuse to refuse anything to the Prime Cause : you affirm at the same time that everything which implies perfection in His work must be allowed Him. You recite the names. But in doing so you are aware that the recital is faulty. You know quite well that the derivative affirmation adds nothing to the original negation. This exigence is nothing but the refusal in a positive form : the truth remains : "We know not what God is : we know only what He is not, and what relation everything else bears to Him." In regard to God, the question "Does He exist?" marks the ultimate point beyond which we cannot go.'

It is not surprising that Dr. Bevan considers that in this passage Sertillanges moves so far from anthropomorphism that he is in danger of falling into agnosticism. He has so emptied his symbols of content that in the end we are left with little more than what has aptly been called 'a neatly expurgated Deity,' a God our symbols for Whom are equivalent to the algebraic x. Another theologian, Professor de Burgh, has recently confessed that the classical theory of Analogy leaves him with a grave sense of dissatisfaction. He is prepared to admit that God's wisdom, power, and goodness are not only different from human wisdom, power, and goodness, but incommensurable with them. God's love for man, however, he refuses to regard as essentially different from man's love for God. Here the only difference is one of degree. He holds that the statement that God is Love 'involves no economy or compromise with finite experience,' because he believes that the concept of divine love is 'generated in direct religious experience, which is applicable both to God and to man univocally and not analogically.'

We need not apologise for using symbolic language in expressing our religious beliefs. Symbolism, as Professor A. N. Whitehead has pointed out, plays a necessary part not only in

theology but in all human life and thought. We cannot get on without it. Language is symbolic. 'The mere sound of a word, or its shape on paper, is indifferent. The word is a symbol, and its meaning is constituted by the ideas, images, and emotions which is raises in the mind of the hearer.' To every symbol corresponds a meaning; but this by no means exhausts the significance of the symbol, for it also evokes emotion and feeling and carries in itself a power of suggestion. In fact, society is held together by a common symbolism, and it is doomed to disintegration if the symbols lose their appeal, or, on the other hand, if their interpretation becomes so rigid that it is incapable of modification. In England the King is the efficient symbol of national unity, and he remains such because it has been possible to adapt the monarchy to changing conditions. Again, a national hero, as George Washington in the United States, may be a symbol of the common life and purpose of his nation. 'There is,' says Professor Whitehead, 'an intricate expressed symbolism of language and act, which is spread throughout the community, and which evokes apprehension of the basis of common purposes.'

Along such lines it might be possible to work out an illuminating *rationale* of sacramental symbolism, for sacraments assuredly evoke apprehension not only of common purpose, but also of common spiritual life and common faith. Dr. Bevan, however, barely touches on sacramental symbolism. He remarks that a sacramental act must have a meaning which can be expressed in words. He does not however think that this exhausts its significance, for beyond is 'an indefinite range of suggestion, felt not formulated.' This, no doubt, is psychologically true; but the vague unformulated suggestion has not necessarily any objective significance. It may be bred of the play of an imagination stimulated by the sacramental rite and its associations, and, though in religion, as in all departments of life and thought, imagination has its proper place and function, to identify the imaginary with the real is fatal. Unbridled imagination is the father of all superstition. That is why sacramentalism has been so fertile in superstitious beliefs. The indefinite, unformulated suggestion of the sacramental symbol stimulates the imagination, and the products of imaginative activity find a focus in the

sacramental symbol and acquire therefrom sanctity and permanence. The pertinacity of sacramental superstition, its imperviousness to criticism, are the result of its intimate association with a sacramental symbol which has become indissolubly a part of the worshipper's most intimate religious life. No symbol can guarantee the truth of what it symbolizes. It is an abuse of symbolism to start from the symbol and, on the ground of its sanctity and associations, to infer the truth of the beliefs which have crystallized around it.

The symbols with which Dr. Bevan is mainly concerned are those which purport to convey religious knowledge of things which are beyond the range of human experience. They are drawn partly from the material world and partly from such constituents of conscious life as emotion, will, and values. Well over half his book is occupied with a careful and illuminating discussion of symbols connected with Height, Time, Light, and Spirit as applied to Deity. This is followed by two chapters on the validity of the symbol of Wrath, a characteristic of the human mind ascribed in some sense to God. So far as Height and Light are concerned it is well to note that these conceptions are also applied symbolically to things which are within the range of ordinary human experience. We habitually speak, for instance, of a lofty character or of a brilliant piece of writing. But when we use temporal symbols in speaking of God, when, for instance, we speak of Him as Everlasting, we raise grave metaphysical questions as to the validity of our symbolism. As Dr. Bevan puts it, 'to think of God's experience as Time prolonged is to think of Time as stronger than God.' Yet God cares for righteousness, that is, for the character of the volitions of human beings, and only in Time is human volition possible. Dr. Bevan concludes, therefore, that Time has a real value for God. He is very critical of those philosophers and theologians who seem to confuse value, which is timeless, with our apprehension of value, which is temporal. To apprehend eternal value is, he holds, not the same thing as to enter into the sphere of Eternity. His sympathies are with the Turk who, caught in a squall at sea, replied to his companion's pious affirmation that God is great, 'Yes, I know that Allah is great, but what troubles me is that this boat is so very small.' Similarly Dr. Bevan. 'It

is no good telling us that the world of values is great and eternal, when we are so small and so subject to time.'

Rudyard Kipling, rather inaptly, speaks of

> 'Such boastings as the Gentiles use
> Or lesser breeds without the law.'

Boasting was the very last thing in which a primitive pagan would indulge. He would regard it as dangerous in the extreme. In his view boasting was just the thing to awaken the wrath of his gods, with dire results to himself. The Old Testament also ascribes anger to Jehovah, and, though the prophets repudiated the idea that God could be provoked to anger by ritual irregularities, they never even suggested that God could not be angry. Dr. Bevan considers that, beyond a doubt, Jesus accepted the Old Testament conception of the Divine Wrath. Its rejection by such Fathers as Clement of Alexandria and Origen he acribes to the alien influence of Greek philosophy. Our acceptance of Wrath as in any sense symbolic of God's nature and activity will necessarily depend, primarily, on our view of wrath as a human characteristic. Wrath, according to Dr. Bevan, demands the infliction of pain on its object and finds satisfaction in his sufferings. Dr. Bevan is a sturdy defender of the propriety of purely retributive justice. It is right and proper, he thinks, that we should enjoy seeing a bully thrashed, even if the thrashing neither reforms the bully nor deters other people from bullying the defenceless. He is receiving his deserts. Nor does Dr. Bevan shrink from the logical consequences of his position. On the contrary, he sees no objection in principle to Aquinas' belief that the sight of the suffering of damned souls adds to the felicity of the redeemed in heaven. But perhaps such pleasure as we may feel in the sight of the castigation of a bully has a purely psychological explanation. It may be that the sight of the thrashing serves to relieve the tension of horror and disgust produced by the bully's previous cruelty. At any rate it is doubtful whether Dr. Bevan, or any other decent man, would take pleasure in seeing a criminal tied up and flogged with the cat-o'-nine-tails, whatever had been his crime. Our acceptance of Wrath as a symbol of God's nature, and the interpretation we place on the symbol, if we accept it, depend on our conception of human justice and of the nature and effect of righteous anger.

In expressing their religious ideas men cannot do otherwise than use conceptions drawn from human experience. There are no others available. Religious symbolism is bound to be anthropomorphic. In primitive religions the anthropomorphism is crude; in the higher religions it is more refined. Nor is anthropomorphism confined to religion. As Dr. Tennant has said, 'Nothing worth calling knowledge of the actual world can be had without some measure of it.' For example, the scientific conception of substance has its ultimate origin in the experience of resistance to touch, just as the notion of cause is derived from experience of the results which follow physical effort. In its soaring flights into the realm inhabited by the 'bloodless categories' thought may seek to ignore the rock from which it is digged; but nevertheless the rock is there and its substance is common experience. It is true that science proceeds by a process of abstraction each step in which necessarily involves some regress from actuality. That is why the actual world cannot be enmeshed in an algebraic formula. The beauty of a sunset escapes the mathematical equations in which the physicist expresses the nature of light. The philosopher and the theologian tread the same path of abstraction. In fact, in every department of our thinking there is need for us to bear constantly in mind the warning of a witty President of Princeton University, 'When you take from anything that which makes it something, what you have left is nothing.' Religious symbolism, even though necessarily anthropomorphic, may be nearer the truth than the abstractions of the metaphysical theologian.

Parallel to the process which leads the metaphysician into a stratosphere inhabited by 'the bloodless categories' is the path of the mystic, who, with painful effort, seeks to divest himself of all thought and feeling. The ancestry of Christian mysticism is disreputable. Its begetter was the fifth-century imposter who, fraudulently appropriating the material for his writings from the Neo-Platonist Pagan Proclus, pretended to be Dionysius the Areopagite, a disciple of St. Paul. It is strange that this forger is still regarded by Rome as a Doctor of the Church. Mysticism is not specifically Christian, nor is it necessarily connected with religious belief of any kind, and, in Dr. Bevan's opinion, it is a great mistake to imagine that those Christians who have adopted

the technique of mysticism have apprehended Christianity in its highest form.

> 'There is a notable absence of any description of a distinctively mystical experience in the documents of Hebrew religion, which the Christian Church has always regarded as containing the purest revelation of God before the coming of Jesus; there is an equally notable absence of such descriptions in the documents recording the life and sayings of Jesus himself. Only perhaps in the experience described by St. Paul, when he seemed to be carried up into the third heaven, do we find in the New Testament something of distinctively mystical character.'

The mystic claims that at the climax of the mystic experience he has no need for symbols; but at the same time the knowledge which he claims to have attained is ineffable and incommunicable, and therefore, if it be in truth knowledge, it must for ever remain his private possession.

Are religious symbols valid, and on what grounds do we hold them to be valid? Our answer to these questions will be largely determined by our view of the nature and genesis of religious faith. Dr. Bevan closes his book with the words, 'What actually causes anyone to believe in God is direct perception of the Divine.' On this view men will construct religious symbols which are valid just so far as they serve to image what is directly, though no doubt dimly, perceived. If and when the direct perception becomes clearer the symbols will demand a corresponding modification. But most theologians have held that faith in God is based on inference, and on inference, in whatever form, from man's experience of the world of which he is a part. Dean Rashdall, whose knowledge of the writings of theologians and philosophers was wider than that of most scholars, said that he read the works of many theologians, ancient, mediaeval and modern, without coming across a trace of the claim to know God otherwise than by inference, and that the same applied to the writings of the masters of philosophical thought. Religious faith resembles the faith of the scientist, both incapable of logical proof, in that it starts from the ground of common experience. If this be so, it is inevitable that God should be represented by symbols provided by common experience. As knowledge of God advances, the symbols will be progressively changed and refined. But we need not be ashamed of using symbols. On this view of faith they may better represent the divine reality than the abstract conceptions of the *a priori* philosopher.

THE MODERNISM OF GEORGE ELIOT*

By the Rev. F. W. Moyle.

'Every scribe who hath been made a disciple of the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is a householder who bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.'—*Matt.* xiii, 52.

THERE is perhaps no more difficult task for a teacher, whether he be a preacher or a writer, than to speak of the past without doing injustice to the future, or to speak of the future without showing ingratitude to the past. Our modern study of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ has made it more abundantly clear than ever before that He made a clean break with the past, that He taught men to re-think God, to re-think religion and to re-think life. His earliest message was 'Change your thinking' (Greek; *metanoeite*, inadequately translated 'repent'). His denunciation of the humbug and hypocrisy of the Pharisees, His revolutionary break with the system of tabu and the oppressive Sabbath laws, His measured reiteration of the contrast 'It was said by them of old time . . . but I say unto you' leave us in no doubt that Jesus was a constructive revolutionary, that it was indeed a new covenant that he sealed with His blood, and that it is a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth international, social and personal righteousness that we His disciples are called to build.

Yet as one reads the Gospels it also becomes clear that Jesus felt a warm gratitude and tenderness for all that was great in His nation's past, and that He used that heritage wherever it was pure. In the moment of crisis in the desert, when He was seeking the will of God for His life, He found His inspiration in the ancient wisdom of His people and words from the *Book of Deuteronomy* strengthened Him; and as He yielded up His spirit on the Cross we hear on His lips the going-to-bed prayer of the Jewish child, 'Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.'

* A sermon preached to the George Eliot Fellowship in Chilvers Coton Parish Church (the 'Shepperton Church' of *Scenes of Clerical Life*) on November 20, 1938, by the Vicar, the Rev. F. W. Moyle, M.A.

When He had been teaching by the most drastic figures the futility of trying to blend the old with the new, and had said that the new wine which was His teaching would inevitably burst the old wine-skins of Judaism, He adds, 'No man having drunk old wine desireth new: for he saith the old is mellow!' And here in the passage I have chosen for my text He seems to appreciate the position of one brought up in the old faith of Judaism—a scribe who, becoming a disciple of Christianity, 'bringeth out of his treasure things new and old.' As a Christian disciple he will accept all the new teaching concerning God which Jesus brings, all the new teaching concerning conduct which Jesus brings, but will not abandon anything that was great and good in the heritage of the past.

I want to put before you to-day the personality and work of George Eliot in that light. She was indeed a Christian disciple and a scribe, a writer, who brought us out of her immense treasure of learning things both new and old. Her hospitable mind readily embraced the new thought which was stirring the minds of the most advanced thinkers of the middle years of the last century. As sub-editor of the *Westminster Review* she came into personal contact with Herbert Spencer, who testified to her 'capacity for abstract thinking along with concrete representation,' and was astonished at the power and breadth of her mind. She had the friendship of the great Italian exile, Mazzini, whose vigorous international ideals still contain a message for this age, and whose personality is thought to be reflected in the character of Mordecai in *Daniel Deronda*.

George Eliot must have been one of the first in this country to see the Bible as a library of human documents, and to trace through its pages man's progressive discovery of God as opposed to a rather arbitrary Divine revelation. This discovery she found to be a great liberation. She writes:

> 'By admitting the mythical elements in the Old Testament the mind is delivered from a heavy burden of contradiction and absurdity, and the religious sentiment of painful anomalies.'

She felt that we breathed an ampler ether and a diviner air through the abandonment of orthodox evangelical interpretations. For

> 'when the soul is liberated from the giant's bed of dogmas on which it

has been racked and stretched ever since it began to think, there is a feeling of exultation and strong hope.'

She saw what we still find it difficult to get some people to see even to-day, that Christ must be loved by the mind as well as by the heart.

At a time when Christianity had no doctrine of immortality but the crude notions of a physical resurrection, she found her own belief in

> 'The immortal dead who live again
> In minds made better by their presence';

for

> 'Still the soul remains
> Larger, diviner than your half-way Church
> Which racks your reason into false consent
> And soothes your love with sops of selfishness.'

She looked to the Church which is still to a great extent the Church of the future:

> 'I demand
> Your Church shall satisfy ideal man,
> His utmost reason and his utmost love.'

She pleaded for the spirit of enquiry and questioning concerning the truths of religion, and declared:

> 'The spirit which doubts the ultimately beneficial tendency of enquiry, which thinks that morality and religion will not bear the broadest daylight which our intellect can throw upon them, is the worst form of Atheism. . . . He who believes that the true and the good are synonymous bears in his soul the essential element of religion.'

She realised that the form of doctrines must be changed to meet the needs of different generations:

> 'Each age and race has a faith and a symbolism of its own. . . . To dream of retaining the spirit along with the form of the past is as futile as embalming a dead body in the hope that it may one day be raised by the living soul.'

With an insight which has led writers to see in her something of the fearless outspokenness of the Hebrew prophets, George Eliot exposed the hollowness of religion as it was preached from this very pulpit by the Church of her day.

> 'Piety,' she says, 'was often confounded with Puritanic egotism; many things were called sin that were not sin; countenances were excessively solemn; insight was blended with opinion; sympathy was confined in narrow conduits of doctrine instead of flowing forth with the freedom of a stream that blesses every weed in its course . . . God's work was too exclusively identified with antagonism to the world, the flesh and the devil; intellectual culture was too limited.'

So George Eliot was a scribe who fearlessly brought out of her treasure 'things new,' some of which are still thought to be new even to-day, though her wider point of view is steadily gaining ground. She certainly re-echoed the protest of Shelley, who, when stung by the narrowness of religion in his time declared, 'I had rather be damned with Plato and Lord Bacon than go to heaven with Paley and Malthus.' Her version of that sentiment is clearly expressed in Romola's reply to Savonarola when he declared that the cause of his party was the cause of God. 'Do not believe it,' said Romola, her whole frame shaking with passionate repugnance; 'God's kingdom is something wider—else let me stand outside with the beings I love.'

She was a prophet of the new age, the new thought, the new Church which is still struggling to the birth. But George Eliot herself was somehow an incarnation of that struggle. Elizabeth Haldane writes:

> 'Intellectually George Eliot rejected the forms which she thought out of date and unnecessary to the time in which she lived. . . . She rejected them with her reason, yet she had a yearning for them in her heart.'

So it is that she brought out of her treasure things *old* as well. Here is a passage of singular local colour:

> 'Mine, I fear, is not a well-regulated mind: it has an occasional tenderness for old abuses: it lingers with a certain fondness over the days of nasal clerks and top-booted parsons and has to sigh for the departed shades of vulgar errors. So it is not surprising that I recall with a fond sadness Shepperton Church as it was in the old days, with its outer coat of rough stucco, its red tiled roof, its heterogeneous windows patched with desultory bits of painted glass, its little flight of stone steps with the wooden rail running up the outer wall and leading to the child's gallery.'

She desired to sympathize with the leaders of progress, but contempt for the past jarred painfully upon her feelings and seemed treasonable to the best human affections. Hence it was that George Eliot is not only to be remembered as a pioneer of progress, but as a prophet of the commonplace. She opens our eyes, especially in the famous stories which concern Coton, to the grandeur and glory of humble lives:

> 'What novelty is worth that sweet monotony where everything is known and loved because it is known? . . . Our delight in the sunshine or the deep-bladed grass to-day might be no more than the faint

> perception of wearied souls, if it were not for the sunshine and the grass in the far off years which still live in us and transform our perception into love.'

In the very passage from which I extracted her severest criticism of the narrowness of the religion in which she was brought up, we find a depth of appreciation of the nobility of the character of Mr. Tryan:

> 'The blessed work of helping the world forward happily does not wait to be done by perfect men. . . . The real heroes of God's making are quite different: they have their natural heritage of love and conscience which they drew in with their mother's milk; they know one or two of those deep spiritual truths which are only to be won by long wrestling with their own sins and their own sorrows. . . . Through a pelting shower of nicknames and bad puns, with an *ad libitum* accompaniment of groans, howls, hisses and hee-haws, Mr. Tryan walked pale and composed, giving his arm to old Mr. Landor whose step was feeble. . . . He struggles his way along the stony road through the crowd of unloving fellow-men . . . he pushes manfully on with fluctuating faith and courage, with a sensitive failing body; at last he falls. The struggle is ended and the crowd closes over the space he has left.'

Beneath all the outworn theology and narrow interpretations of the evangelical Christianity of her day, George Eliot penetrated to the heart of things and showed the strength and splendour of that which is old yet ever new, the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. This is more than a character in a story speaking:

> 'You are weary and heavy laden; well, it is you Christ invites to come to Him and find rest. He asks you to cling to Him, to lean on Him. He does not command you to walk alone without stumbling. He neither condemns nor reproaches you for the past. He only bids you to come to Him that you may have life. As long as we live in rebellion against God, desiring to have our own will, seeking happiness in the things of this world, it is as if we shut ourselves up in a crowded, stifling room where we breathe only poisoned air, but we have only to walk out under the infinite heavens and we breathe the pure free air that gives us health and strength and gladness. . . . Carry therefore that difficulty to Christ along with all your other sins and wickednesses and ask Him to pour into you the spirit of submission. He enters into your struggles; He has drunk the cup of your suffering to the dregs; He knows the hard wrestling it costs us to say, "Not my will, but Thine be done."'

So we can give thanks to-day for a great soul, one who was a 'scribe made a disciple of the Kingdom of Heaven who brought out of her treasure things new and old.'

BOOK REVIEWS

MILITANT MODERNISM*

One task of Modernism, the new Christian apologetic, is to try to persuade the regular church-goer that in this presentation of Christianity nothing essential in the old faith has been sacrificed. This may be hard, for in the present unsettlement some people get frightened and are afraid to follow the argument wherever it may lead. They hesitate to trust themselves to reason, and look for some principle to give them a certainty above reason. But if Christianity is to survive as the faith of intelligent and brave people it must treat reason as a friend and ally, not as an enemy. Reason is the instrument by which science learns to understand the physical universe. Christianity also gives man a world-view. Since the universe is one, it must use similar methods to those which have proved so fruitful in modern science.

Dr. Cadoux has written a most valuable book of Modernist apologetic. In four lectures, first delivered to theological students and now enlarged to a book of 174 pages, he has put the case for evangelical Modernism in a forcible and most convincing way. His book is addressed primarily to those who already call themselves Christian; but it will appeal to all who care for a rational faith.

He begins by insisting that Christianity must be rational. It claims to be the absolute religion, and therefore to be true, 'the truth relevant to Christian salvation.'

> 'The recognition of the claims of truth is a moral axiom which the Christian theologian can never afford to neglect.'

Christians value orthodoxy, but orthodoxy means true opinion, truth; and therefore

> 'whatever validity the traditional Christian doctrines possess, they owe ultimately not to their antiquity, nor to their ubiquity, nor even to their Scripturality, but to their capacity to vindicate themselves to Christian hearts and minds as true. The essence of the Gospel consists, not necessarily in what our Christian predecessors proclaimed, but in what the Spirit of the living God reveals to us as true.'

What then is the way to orthodoxy, to true opinion? Dr. Cadoux answers that we must draw an analogy from natural science. For the methods of advance to truth in theology and science are the same. Scientific inquiry, like theology, rests on faith.

> 'The great axioms on which all science rests — the uniformity of nature, the self-consistency of truth, the reliability of the senses and of

**The Case for Evangelical Modernism.* By C. J. Cadoux, D.D. (Hodder & Stoughton. 1938. 7/6.)

the laws of reasoning—are not things that have to be proved before we can use them; they are taken for granted, accepted on faith.'

'The customary distinction drawn between religious knowledge as based on revelation, and scientific knowledge as based on reason, proves to be an illusion, so far as concerns, not the nature of the things known, but the epistemology involved. Revelation and faith are present in science as well as in theology; reason is present in theology as well as in science.'

Three false ways of trying to reach orthodoxy are then examined—Humanism, Barthianism and Traditionalism. Of Barthianism Dr. Cadoux says

'it is not only paradoxical, but self-contradictory; it is needlessly dualistic and bristles with false antitheses.'

Dr. Cadoux has a disconcerting way of taking a fine phrase and asking what it means. He does justice to the Barthian emphasis on the givenness of revelation; but he shows that when Barthianism is stripped of its rhetoric there is little left.

Next for traditionalism. By 'traditionalism' Dr. Cadoux means the view

'that over and above personal self-commitment to God through Christ, essential Christianity requires the acceptance of a certain *definable minimum* of doctrines, failure to accept any one of which calls for the surrender of the claim to be a Christian.'

If this were granted, then the parallel between science and theology would be broken. Science formulates 'laws of nature,' but is always ready to modify and correct them as fresh facts are discovered. If Christianity is true, then theology must do the same.

'The attempt to draw a hard and fast line around any group of doctrines large or small, so that all within is essential and all without optional, appears to me (Dr. Cadoux) to be inherently unsound as a method of determining the way to orthodoxy.'

He proves this by showing that there are no principles by which Christians can determine objectively the fixed essentials of Christian belief. Traditionalism even contradicts itself, since traditionalists cannot agree as to what the essentials are. Certain beliefs which were once judged fundamental, like that of Biblical inerrancy, are now largely dropped.

In his third chapter Dr. Cadoux examines the classical formulation of Christian doctrine, the formula of Chalcedon. On one side it is strong, for it

'conserved the central doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus, the conviction that the Divinity which men saw in him was as truly Divine as that of the Creator Himself.'

But it also led men to think of Christ as a Divine Person with an impersonal human nature; and this meant the denial of his humanity. Metaphysical interest caused the Chalcedonian Fathers to misinterpret the Gospel evid-

ence. For it is clear from the Gospels that Jesus was truly man. Their error had disastrous consequences. The carnage, persecution and cruelty of the Middle Ages were due in large measure 'to the dreadful oblivion of the moral requirements of Christian discipleship.'

> 'Christians as a whole failed to see the connection between ardent loyalty to their Church and the cultivation of a Christ-like character.'

'Councils and creeds cannot go behind, but must wholly rest upon the history of Our Lord Jesus Christ,' Dr. Cadoux quotes from R. C. Moberly in *Lux Mundi*. Christian history is the necessary basis of Christian theology. Since the Chalcedonian formula misinterprets the Gospel evidence one must turn again to the Gospels to discover the Jesus of history. In spite of objections from the traditionalists, the undertaking cannot be ruled out as impossible. And if it were so, the Chalcedonian formula itself would be equally baseless. The writers of the New Testament had the same starting point in their various attempts to find a satisfactory interpretation of the Person of Jesus. The modern theologian must use their evidence, and try to reach a more complete result.

Dr. Cadoux's conclusion is familiar to Modernists. The Jesus of history was perfect man, and we find His Divinity in the moral and spiritual qualities of His humanity.'

> 'Jesus lived a life of unbroken, growing, and intimate fellowship with God and of unstinted love for man. We stand overawed before the invasive goodness which His life displayed, . . . His eagerness to impart to men the truth about God and to move them to seek Him, . . . and that numinous quality of being which is the unfailing accompaniment of goodness.'

The conclusion is that

> '"God's Presence and His very Self" manifested with unique clarity and fullness in the overwhelming goodness of Jesus is after the same fashion, though with less clarity and fullness, manifested in those in whom Jesus Himself has called forth a longing to follow Him.' 'He is the first-born among many brethren.'

Canon Quick finds this line of argument attractive, but says

> 'it is very difficult to find anything in it to which a Unitarian could in principle object.'

But why reject a position because so-and-so could probably accept it?

> 'The real cleavage for Christian people is between those who do, and those who do not, put Christ in the centre of their religion.'

There can be no doubt where Dr. Cadoux places Him. His book is one of the clearest and ablest statements of Modernism we have read. It contains a Gospel, a real message of salvation to the modern world.

J. K. Nettlefold.

THE COURAGE TO BE REAL*

Those who are familiar with Mr. Geoffrey Allen's earlier books will recognise his new book as his best.* The first, *Tell John,* written partly under the influence of the New German Protestantism, set out the need of man who turns in despair from the works of his own hands with the basic religious confession, 'Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean life, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean life; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.' Mr. Allen has gone beyond this, a great deal beyond it, but he has not discarded it. He would be the first to acknowledge his continued allegiance to that first vision and certainty of the greatness of God and the littleness of man. Thus he writes in this latest volume: 'The faith in the transcendence of God is an urgent doctrine, through all the dark times of doubt, through which our souls must pass. God is not dependent for His existence upon our awareness of His being.' And again, after quoting the cry of Micah (not the prophet but the ecclesiastical spike), 'Ye have taken away my gods which I made . . . and what have I now?' he writes, 'We shall see in due time, that we had to love the gods which we had made, in order to find or be found by the God by Whom we are made.' In this and other similar passages, there is more than an echo of the thought which predominated in *Tell John.* The essential truth of the first book remains, though now it has been absorbed into a larger whole.

Mr. Allen's second book, *He that Cometh,* was written under the influence of the Group Movement. The book was a 'best seller.' Its note was one of personal testimony and confession. Mr. Allen had come to know the touch of 'the live coal from off the altar,' and he was ready to share that purifying experience with all who would listen to him and with one at any rate who could not. The experience which prompted the writing of *He that Cometh* also has its part to play in Mr. Allen's fuller views. Forgiveness known in one's own life and thereafter shared with others, guidance and the guiding word spoken to another in his need, sincerity with oneself and the leading of others into a like sincerity, all these experiences and insights have reached a deeper level in *The Courage to be Real.* What might be called the eccentricities of the Group Movement have been cast off, while Mr. Allen has embraced and lifted on to a higher level of thought and feeling the fundamental truths which he discovered through his close association with the Group. Mr. Allen always writes in a generous spirit, and his ready acknowledgment of both his debt to others, and of his own growing pains as he struggles to be true to his own guiding light, are the outward tokens of this generosity. Writing of Evangelism he says:

> 'We must wait and pray and hope. We must live with others in love when they are living, longing to lead them into a deeper world of

* *The Courage to be Real.* By Geoffrey Allen. (Maclehose. 5/-.)

> vision, yet unable to do so until they desire to come. Yet one or two things we may do. We may so live as to create around others an environment of forgiveness. . . . To some who by their training are ready for such language, we can preach the Cross. . . . To others the explicit preaching of the Cross would as yet suggest a question from which they shrink, not a liberation of spirit for which they long. We must then ourselves know so deeply the reality of the Atonement, that we can proclaim its meaning without using one word of its conventional theological language. We must be ready to proclaim forgiveness with a smile, with a courtesy of word or action, with an explicit direct naming of evil, in such a way as to show that we ourselves are not afraid of evil. We must have in our memories a fund of stories which illustrate the ways of healing love.'

The quotation illustrates how the writer has surmounted the intolerance of the Group method while maintaining the essentials of the Group experience.

In his third book, *Christ the Victorious,* Mr. Allen was feeling his way to his latest position. The preface expressly says that the author was writing in a period of inner conflict and that two earlier attempts to formulate his thoughts were destroyed in manuscript. He was on the threshold of new work, and for the moment he had no new vision: he was rather engaged upon the task of sifting his previous experience.

With this new volume we can see that the sifting process has been completed and new tasks and opportunities have brought to maturity the convictions he has carried with him. Mr. Allen now writes as one who has heard the deeper implications of the Divine question, ' Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? ' and his answer, given in this book, shows a sureness of touch and a clearsightedness which gives to his description of the nature of the Christian's commission the true prophetic note. He sees that commission with its demands and its promises in both its universal and its individual aspects. He has looked at the world within and the world without, and the portrait of man which he displays to our view is a very valuable contribution to the work of recreating that Christian understanding of man's nature, life, and destiny, which the world to-day so sorely needs.

ROY MACKAY.

RELIGION AND RELIGIONS*

The Zoroastrian religion is interesting for several reasons: its historical importance as the religion of Iran before Islam, its contribution of certain doctrines to post-exilic Judaism, and its preservation to this day

* *The Religion of the Good Life, Zoroastrianism.* By R. P. Masani. (Allen & Unwin. 1938. 6/-.)

The Gospel, Christianity and other Faiths. By Heinrich Frick, translated by J. Haire. (Blackwell. 1938. 3/6.)

The Perfect Master, the Life of Shri Meher Baba. By C. B. Purdom. (Williams & Norgate. 1937. 12/6.)

Contemporary Indian Philosophy. Edited by S. Radhakrishnan and J. H. Muirhead. (Allen & Unwin. 1936. 16/-.)

as the religion of the Parsis. Mr. Masani's book is a delightfully written account of the religion by a devout and broad-minded Parsi. It is intended as a first introduction to the subject, and depends on the well-known authorities, European and Parsi. The author is at pains to show that Zoroastrianism is a pure monotheism. This fact is admitted by scholars, though it has largely been obscured, partly by misunderstandings and partly by the distortion of Zarathushtra's original teaching, so that it is commonly thought that Zoroastrianism is a dualism, or inculcates the worship of angels or of fire. The moral tone of the religion is high, and there is tremendous emphasis on self-help in the spiritual life. An Afghan convert to Christianity, known to the reviewer, in telling the story of his life, said how at one stage he studied the Avesta, and talked with Parsi scholars: 'I became still more dejected as regards the way of salvation, for there is no reasonable method of salvation set forth in this religion.' The author of this book expresses the same fact no less forcibly when he says: 'Man receives reward or punishment after death according to his deeds. There is none to intercede for him. No intercession will help him. No amount of prayers and offerings will open the gates of paradise for him. No particular creed or belief in any set dogmas will save him from retribution. In short, no trace of vicarious salvation can be seen in the message of Zarathushtra. Man is his own saviour. He has the making of his own heaven or his own hell.' For the period in which it arose, Zoroastrianism is a remarkable religion, and one worthy of study, but it is scarcely surprising that it does not win adherents at the present day. The man who is honest with himself knows that his heart is desperately sick, and that he needs a Saviour.

Professor Frick's book is a theoretical study of the attitude to be adopted towards other religions. His thesis is that we ought not simply to compare Christianity with other religions, but to compare in rotation the Gospel, Christianity and other faiths. It is clear to every missionary that we do not get a contrast of truth and untruth if we simply compare Christianity as we practise it with the non-Christian religions, and that it is necessary to take into account the Gospel of Christ, *i.e.* Christianity as it ought to be. But in fairness to the other religions there is yet a fourth object of comparison, which Dr. Frick forgets, *viz.* the original message of the founders of the other religions. Unless we do this we are unfairly comparing the ideal Christianity with the actual non-Christian religion. It should also be pointed out, since the author spends some time on a comparison of Christianity and the Gospel with Buddhism, that Buddhism is by no means the characteristic non-Christian religion, nor even the characteristic religion of Asia.

'The Perfect Master' is an account of the life and teaching of one of those strange figures which India throws up from time to time. He deserves

the title of Master for the extraordinary hold he has on his motley band of followers. Often he would suddenly command them to fast; once he commanded them to go on eating when they were already more than satisfied, and such was his hypnotic hold over them that they dared not disobey. His teaching is so vague that it is difficult to see any system in it. At one time he said, in accordance with his Parsi ancestry, that one must gain heaven by one's own exertions; but in the next breath he said that the question of heaven and hell did not concern one. Since 1925 he has refused to speak. Two and a half years later he gave up writing, and communicated by signs and by pointing to an alphabet board. It is difficult in all this to see any religious principle, or indeed anything except an egocentric eccentricity. Many of those who came in contact with him exhibited abnormal psychological behaviour, often going unconscious for an hour or more. At one time he held a kind of school until trouble was caused among the parents by the boys' habit of continued emotional weeping. In any other country than India such a man would be dismissed as a madman. It is a pathetic commentary on India's age-long search for God that so often madness and sainthood are confused.

'Contemporary Indian Philosophy,' as its name implies, deals with philosophy rather than religion, but the background of all the fourteen writers is Hinduism, so that it provides from one aspect a study of Hinduism. It is always difficult to review a collection of essays, and notably so in the case of an important volume like this, in which each of the essays deserves a review to itself. Probably the question which most readers would ask, on hearing the title of the book, would be: To what extent do these writers present a philosophy or philosophies which are characteristically Indian, which bring to the world's philosophic studies ideas which are new to the West and likely to be fruitful? It must be said at once that most of the writers have studied deeply the philosophies of the West as well as the philosophy of Hinduism. Two at least of the essays appear to be such as might have come from Western writers. One, although the author has read Western philosophy, is almost uninfluenced by Western thought. The rest in various degrees attempt a combination of the wisdom of East and West. This attempt is peculiarly difficult, for Indian philosophy is far more closely tied to Hinduism than Western philosophy is to Christianity. Even if the Western philosopher is a Christian, he bases his philosophy on scientific 'facts' and rational argument, and only proceeds at a later stage to consider the relation of his philosophy to the 'revealed truths' or dogmas of Christianity. The Indian philosopher, on the other hand, treats the dogmas of Hinduism, such as *karma*, reincarnation, and the unity of *Brahman* and *Atman* as basic facts, and this he is almost forced to do if he is to be true to Indian philosophical tradition, for it is difficult to say where Hinduism ceases to be a religion and becomes a

philosophy. One writer does indeed boldly state that Indian philosophy is closed all round by four walls of unproved dogmas, and proceeds to say that 'extraneous assumptions of any kind, which do not directly explain experience, but which are brought in from outside, are bound to hamper the progress of philosophical speculations and blur the philosophical outlook.' The Western reader finds it hard to follow the other writers who accept these dogmas as the bases of philosophy instead of regarding them as theories to be defended or attacked by argument. For those who regard these dogmas as basic facts it seems imperative to fit them in with the accepted theories of the West. Thus one writer claims that 'reincarnation explains the gradual evolution of the soul from the minutest amoeba to the highest man,' and that 'the theory of reincarnation is a logical necessity for the completion of the theory of evolution.' It is scarcely likely that any philosopher, who had not been brought up to believe in *karma* as a fact, would find in it a satisfactory solution of the problem of evil, and it is difficult to believe that any non-Hindu scientist or philosopher would agree that 'the word-sound made of three letters, *A*, *U*, *M*, may be regarded as the elemental sound-continuum which can yield all the sounds of animate and inanimate nature. This sound-word reverberating through space is the prime manifestation of the Unmanifest.' One of the writers expresses explicitly an idea that seems to underlie a great part of the book that there is a common metaphysical basis of all religions; and a few pages later he says, 'What metaphysic understands by immortality and by eternity implies and demands of every man a total and uncompromising denial of himself and a final mortification, to be dead and buried in the Godhead' — a conclusion which is definitely Hindu and equally definitely opposed to the Christian hope. One would like to draw special attention to the beautiful essay by Professor Radhakrishnan, 'The Spirit of Man,' and in that essay to a sentence in the first paragraph, 'To the Indian mind, philosophy is essentially practical, dealing as it does with the fundamental anxieties of human beings, which are more insistent than abstract speculations. We are not contemplating the world from outside but are in it.'

L. E. Browne.

LET SCIENCE BE HUMAN*

Professor Hogben calls his book 'the first British handbook of *Scientific Humanism.*' He is interested in the impact of science upon society, and upon social effort. Scientific discoveries affect the everyday lives of everyone, and therefore natural science should be an essential part of the citizen's education. And science must be regarded 'as a record of past, and as an inventory of future, achievements.' It cannot be divorced from

* *Science for the Citizen.* By Lancelot Hogben. (pp. 1120. Allen & Unwin. 12/6.) *Scientists are Human.* By David Lindsay Watson. (Watts. 7/6.)

history, nor from the human struggle for the betterment of conditions of life. It is not only necessary to interpret the world, but to *change* it. 'Science is organized workmanship. Its history is co-extensive with civilized living.' Professor Hogben's attitude to science may be called dynamic, to distinguish it from the mandarin standpoint of those who claim to believe in 'pure' science. The trouble is that when religion, art, or science are 'pure,' they simply evaporate. They must maintain contact with human life and its needs.

> 'Whether we choose to call it pure or applied, the story of science is not something apart from the common life of mankind. What we call pure science only thrives when the contemporary social structure is capable of making full use of its teaching, furnishing it with new problems for solution and equipping it with new instruments for solving them. Without printing there would have been little demand for spectacles; without spectacles neither telescope nor microscope; without these the finite velocity of light, the annual parallax of the stars, and the micro-organisms of fermentation processes and disease would never have been known to science. Without the pendulum clock and the projectile there would have been no dynamics nor theory of sound. Without the dynamics of the pendulum and the projectile, no *Principia*. Without deep-shaft mining in the sixteenth century, when abundant slave labour was no longer to hand, there would have been no social urge to study air pressure, ventilation, and explosion. Balloons would not have been invented, chemistry would have barely surpassed the level reached in the third millennium B.C., and the conditions for discovering the electric current would have been lacking.'

Thus in his historical survey Professor Hogben cuts across the customary divisions of the sciences, and groups his topics under the themes of man's conquest of (1) time-reckoning and earth-measurement; (2) material substitutes; (3) power resources; (4) hunger and disease; (5) behaviour. As a matter of fact, scientific activities under (1) were largely physics; under (2) chemistry; (3) a combination of these two sciences; while (4) and (5) involve biology and psychology. But he is successful in showing that actual social needs were throughout the motive power in the development of science, from the building of Stonehenge to provide a seasonal almanac, to modern experiments in plant breeding.

It must be admitted that when scientific discoveries are placed in their historical context their interest is doubled. Professor Hogben is inclined to disturb some settled estimates:

> 'The positive contributions of the Greeks to the advancement of new knowledge of nature are easy to exaggerate, and what useful discoveries they made belong to the earlier period and localities where they were in closest touch with the great trading centres of northern Palestine. . .
>
> 'The great contribution of the Greeks to the advance of knowledge was that they took a decisive step away from the association of natural inquiry with ritual. They travelled. They were curious, and they recorded the results of their travels in a language better fitted to

> exact description than the scripts of the priesthood . . . Eventually they fell victims to a practice which is no less pernicious than priesthood itself. As time passed the pursuit of science and the art of mathematics which should be its servant came to be regarded more and more as a mere recreation for a leisured and litigious class. They developed that inveterate belief in logic which is the password of the legal profession and the peril of science. Mathematics became the master instead of the servant, and was itself sterilised by losing contact with the world's work.'

Aristotle devoted much of his energy to verbal refutations of the sound experimental physics of his Ionian predecessors; while Plato, who blandly declared that all the works of Democritus ought to be burned, did not hesitate to make contemptuous references to astronomical observations or to the pioneer acoustical experiments of the Pythagoreans.

> 'From this morass of metaphysical disputation, into which the secular knowledge received by the Attic Greeks from their Ionian predecessors had fallen, the culture of classical antiquity was rescued by the brutal realities of war. The conquests of Alexander brought new opportunities of intellectual intercourse, new contacts with the world's affairs, and led to the foundation of a cosmopolitan seat of learning near the site of the greatest Egyptian triumphs of architecture and irrigation.'

There is a moral here for ourselves which Professor Hogben, in a very topical Epilogue, does not hesitate to draw. Pure and applied science are inextricably related as shoot and root in the process of healthy growth; and if the soil of social practice for any reason does not nourish the root, the shoot will wither. Is there at present anything which acts as a brake upon the development of scientific theory because new scientific practices might endanger vested interests? And what at present are the restrictions crippling subsidised research? And is it not a fact that the metaphysical corollaries, rather than the practical applications, of scientific truths are engaging the attention of our enfeebled intellectuals?

Dr. Watson's book is in part a somewhat drastic criticism of scientific institutions and of the more academic type of scientist; and in part a plea for the broadening of scientific methods. Universities

> 'provide a comfortable haven for those who are timid physically and mentally, and whose investigative talent lies in a thoroughly orthodox channel.'

As for endowed research institutes, they 'give a warm welcome to satellites of a well-established idea,' and 'encourage ambitious mediocrities.' But the most important section of the book is a long chapter entitled 'On the Similarity of Forms and Ideas.' It comprises fully a third of the book's space, and its thesis is that the chief mental processes by which science is created are the same as the intuitive judgments of everyday life. Speaking of this chapter, Professor John Dewey, in a Foreword contributed by him to the volume, says:

> 'It is somewhat more technical in content, though not in style, than the other chapters, because it constructs their intellectual base. It is in effect a well-grounded plea for a recognition of the inherent likeness of aesthetic response and of artistic creativity with genuine scientific procedure.'

It may be thought that Mr. Watson might well have devoted his whole book to this important thesis and have jettisoned his critique of established scientific habits and institutions, which is only likely to create prejudice against him. But such a critique is quite relevant, for the trouble is that conventional scientific training builds certain conceptions, fixed in a certain framework, so firmly into the students' mental organization that they can only see what conforms to that framework. Anything that does not fit in they simply do not see, even if it is before their eyes. Thus (to quote Professor Dewey) 'the framework of conception becomes a restriction of scientific inquiry unless it unites intimately and thoroughly with that vital sensitivity of impulse and response which is the property of unspoiled common sense, and which finds its effective expression in the work of the creative artist.'

Dr. Watson's book is a powerful and much-needed plea for the broadening and humanising of scientific method and of education in science.

J. C. Hardwick.

HALF A CENTURY OF CATHOLIC THOUGHT IN FRANCE*

To a few, at least, it may seem paradoxical to be told that during the last half century the intellectual life of the French people has been re-created by Catholicism. Yet an impartial survey of the period might well lead to the conclusion that this, broadly speaking, is so. With the death of Renan the dilettante scepticism which he popularised lost much of its appeal, and gave way to an unmistakable revival of interest in religion; a revival illustrated, in diverse ways, by the conversion of Brunetière and the work of Claudel and Péguy, and by Modernism. Moreover its strength is by no means spent even now; the War did not retard it as much as might have been expected, and to-day the Thomism of a Jacques Maritain (to mention only one in a brilliant sequence of names) represents—to an outside observer at any rate—the most remarkable expression in post-War years of that genius for metaphysics which has come to be considered part of a Frenchman's national heritage. M. Magnin's book, devoted largely to Catholicism in France, is a comprehensive survey of this revival. Described by him as 'un essai de synthèse et de confrontation,' it is well-informed and concisely written. The author may, perhaps, be criticised for not having kept within the very liberal bounds set him by his title, and for having given us, in consequence, an outline history of French religious and philosophic thought

* *Un demi-siècle de pensée Catholique.* By E. Magnin. (Cahiers de la Nouvelle Journée.) (Paris. Bloud et Gay. 190 pp. 24 frs.)

as a whole from the ' tristes années quatre-vingts,' as Claudel called them, down to our own time—which presumably was not his original intention. But making all allowance for departure from his professed aim, his record is an impressive witness to the vitality and abundant intellectual and spiritual achievement of the French Church in recent years. M. Magnin writes, of course, as a Catholic himself, but his work is singularly free from any prejudiced judgment on doctrines and opinions which he personally can in no way share. It shows, besides fair-mindedness, a spirit genuinely liberal, and characteristic, it may be added, of the excellent series, aptly entitled *Cahiers de la Nouvelle Journée,* to which the present volume is the latest addition. The chapter on Modernism (a subject that seldom fails to expose the tenderer places of a Catholic writer's heart) is particularly noteworthy for its restrained yet sympathetic treatment.

A great many names and titles figure in M. Magnin's pages—too many for so short a book. It is not surprising, therefore, that his remarks are sometimes sketchy and uninstructive. Unfortunately, space was not found for a rather more ample account of the work of M. Maurice Blondel. At one time Blondel was thought to be implicated in the Modernist movement, and the philosophy of ' immanence,' condemned by Pius X in the notorious encyclical *Pascendi dominici gregis,* was traced to the influence of *L'Action,* the former's much-discussed doctorate thesis, published in 1893. It was supposed that a second edition of this work was withheld in deference to the ecclesiastical authorities. This new edition at last made its appearance a few months ago, in a revised and enlarged form, and, together with Blondel's other lately published volumes, presents a veritable *summa philosophica,* comparable in scope and method (and, regrettably, in the frequent obscurities of its style) to Hegel's *Phänomenologie des Geistes.*

M. Magnin has had occasion to touch on, besides philosophy, exegesis and ecclesiastical history. Here the names most prominent, those of Duchesne, Loisy and Lagrange, have long been familiar to English readers. M. Loisy is still publishing, but Père Lagrange has passed away. By his death Christendom generally has lost a scholar and exegete of encyclopaedic erudition.

B. M. Garvin Reardon.

THE NATURE OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE*

Professor Douglas Clyde Macintosh of Yale University is known to the general public as a man who was denied American citizenship because he maintains that his ultimate loyalty is to the will of God and not to the Congress of the United States of America. Students of philosophy know Professor Macintosh as the author of a number of books: the monumental

* *The Nature of Religious Experience.* By Eugene Garrett Bewkes, Julius Seelye Bixler, Robert Lowry Calhoun, Vergilius Ferm, Hugh Hartshorne, Cornelius Krusé, H. Richard Niebuhr, Reinhold Niebuhr, Filmer S. C. Northrop, Daniel Sommer Robinson, George F. Thomas. (Essays in Honor of Douglas Clyde Macintosh, by former students.) (Harper and Brothers. 1937. $2.50.)

Problem of Knowledge, the original *Theology as an Empirical Science,* the Bross prize-winner and text in apologetics *The Reasonableness of Christianity,* the Calcutta lectures on *The Pilgrimage of Faith.* He is the editor of *Religious Realism,* and his contribution to that symposium, 'Experimental Realism in Religion,' is an excellent summary of his position.

> 'But a still smaller group has known him primarily as a great teacher, who did indeed come to America on their behalf, and who has treated them as he treated the government, forcing them to take the part of philosophers and to try their skill against his in the discipline of dialectic' (p. x).

That he has done his task well is evident in these eleven essays, written in his honour.

These essays centre around the subject in which Professor Macintosh has done his greatest work, *The Nature of Religious Experience.* The writers, all profoundly influenced by their revered teacher, do not agree in their solutions of the problem of religious knowledge and its relation to religious experience. Each writer, in his way, illustrates his debt to his great teacher; but every one has travelled a long way from his master.

The Preface offers a short introduction to Professor Macintosh's position. It tells us too little of the man himself, and it would have been desirable to have a complete essay on the Macintosh point of view. The summary, however brief, is excellent.

> 'The scientific method is now acknowledged to be the method by which knowledge must come. Professor Macintosh has applied it to religion. The special questions attending its application lead to an examination of our ability to perceive both with the eye of the body and that of the spirit, of our right to form hypotheses on the basis of what we perceive, and of the possible success that we may expect when we try to establish these hypotheses as true. With each of these questions Professor Macintosh has dealt, and in each case he has refused to allow obstructions to break up the fundamental unity of the stream of life. His final test has always been that of experience in its widest sense. But his empiricism meets the claims of common human convictions as adequately as those of subtle philosophical analysis' (p. xii).

Professor Macintosh's empiricism and realism meet the demands of the present social mind. His position is consistent with common sense. Quite naturally, the first essay shows the affinity between Professor Macintosh's position and the common sense realism of the Scottish thinkers following Thomas Reid.

Professor Bewkes traces out the influence of Thomas Reid on his Scottish successors, which

> 'must leave us with the impression that, had more attention been paid to him, modern realism would have come into its own much sooner, and philosophy as a whole would have been much enriched' (p. 3).

Professor Macintosh, following this same tradition, says Bewkes,

> 'felt that it was necessary to give much attention to the question of our

knowledge of the external world, in the confidence that if we can defend our knowledge from dualism and scepticism, we have established confidence in the essential testimony of our moral and religious experience' (pp. 10, 11).

Reference is also made to John M'Leod Campbell, who is increasingly being recognized as 'the greatest of all Scottish theologians.' It is he who first applied realism to knowledge of God, maintaining that *'the irreducible given' of religious experience 'is the conviction of otherness or God which attends it'* (p. 17, italics mine).

Professor Ferm objects to a theology based upon religious experience. The term religious experience, he says, is a 'weasel' one. He tells us that

> 'an individual may be said *to be religious* if in some vital manner he reacts to whatever he takes to be of serious and ulterior concern, however dimly apprehended' (p. 35).
>
> 'There is no special feeling that is religious any more than there is a special instinct that is religious. . . . What makes a feeling religious is its connection with some ulterior concern' (p. 41).

Maintaining that theology is simply an 'intellectual construction,' it has no real connection with religious feelings. A rational theology is consistent with the history of Christian thought, and it is to this that we must return.

Professor Thomas gives us a well-balanced article which analyses the empirical theology of Macintosh, the philosophical theology of F. R. Tennant, the ethical theology of A. E. Taylor and Edouard Le Roy. He arrives at the conclusion that,

> 'while religious faith is intuitive in origin, it must be developed and supported by philosophical analyses of nature and man. Religious beliefs are beliefs concerning the Whole and its Ground. This means that they are metaphysical in nature and that complete certainty about them is unattainable. . . . All that need be demanded by the rational man is that his religious beliefs shall withstand the test of his limited experience of the whole' (pp. 64-65).

This position is eclectic, with too much emphasis on subjective certitude and faith. But it will satisfy more orthodox readers.

According to H. Richard Niebuhr of Yale University, Macintosh and Henry Nelson Wieman are guilty of using logically prior *relative* values for *absolute* evaluations of religious experience. Relative values, which are accepted as absolute for persons, are made criteria of the divine. We cannot proceed, declares Niebuhr, from the experience of values which are applicable to individuals to theorizing about the social or cosmic nature of things. Such extensions are precarious adventures, with little possibility of achieving any real knowledge of religious values as such. The great error of the empiricists, according to Niebuhr, is that they have used values gained from non-religious experience

> 'as absolute criteria of theology. Only if this approach is abandoned can theology become truly disinterested, just to the requirements of religious experience, and philosophically consistent' (p. 110).

It is necessary, first of all, to recognize that all values are relative. But values are relative to structure and organic needs rather than to desire and consciousness. Values are real, but depend upon the object for their existence. Values cannot be abstracted from the object or subject. Values exist in valued beings.

> 'The important question,' says Niebuhr, 'is not whether a god exists, but rather, what being or beings have the value of deity' (p. 114).

We need to discuss the nature of God in terms of man's need for God, which is not to be discovered in any subjective responses or in the conservation of the highest human values. It is

> 'the need for that which makes life worth living, which bestows meaning on life by revealing itself as the final source of life's being and value. The religious need is satisfied only in so far as man is able to recognize himself as valued by something beyond himself. That has the value of deity for man which values him' (p. 115).

For Niebuhr, the experience of a being which values the subject is a primitive and original value experience. We cannot make an analysis of this experience on the basis of 'values known and regarded as absolute prior to the experience.' Such an experience will lead to ethical action, but the values to be sought

> 'cannot be decided prior to the experience of that which is the source of all value. The experience of the ground and source of all value leads to the criticism and reconstruction of the ethical system rather than to the support of the one which has been accepted as absolute prior to the experience' (pp. 115-6).

Niebuhr's conclusion is vague; but he has pointed out the difficulties of the value-empircal approach to theology. This essay indicates some changes in Niebuhr's fundamental position — away from supernaturalism toward naturalism.

All of the essays in the volume are penetrating. J. Seelye Bixler examines carefully the empiricism of William James, Macintosh, and Wieman, and then indicates that we must turn to phenomenology. He indicates some of the fine work being done by Max Scheler, Nikolai Hartmann, and others. Reinhold Neibuhr discusses his familiar 'Truth Value of Myths.' Cornelius Krusé asks 'Is Subjectivism in Value Theory Compatible with Realism and Meliorism?' and he answers with an unqualified 'No!' Robert L. Calhoun criticizes the radical empiricism of Hume, Dewey, and C. I. Lewis, and ends by criticizing 'subjective idealism in religion' and Schleiermacher's 'philosophy of identity.' We must keep the reality of God and man distinct holding that

> 'each man stands over against God as a real other self' (p. 182).

F. C. S. Northrop discusses the age-old problem of the one and the many. Hugh Hartshorne suggests that we must undergo a transformation of consciousness in order to become aware of that underlying process of divine

reality. Daniel S. Robinson concludes the book with 'A Definition of Religious Liberalism,' drawing from Macintosh and Georg Wobbermin. He maintains that a study of liberalism brings to light three central principles.

> (1) Genuine religious liberalism is continuous with the main line of development of historic religion within our western culture, and any type of religious thought which violently breaks this continuity and claims to be the true religious liberalism is a spurious form. . . . (2) Genuine religious liberalism claims no special occult method either of knowing or of controlling the religious object. . . . (3) Genuine religious liberalism incorporates within itself the social program of gradually modifying the whole body of institutions which constitute Western culture until they are thoroughly purged of their evils, without going to the extreme of identifying religion with the progressive activities that are going on in the world to-day. In other words, it includes the social gospel, but it excludes dogmatic Marxian social materialistic philosophy' (pp. 232-3).

Whether we admit with Macintosh that religious experience is central in theology, or whether we believe the dominant trend to be the seeking of God outside the world of human consciousness, there can be no doubt of the value of this symposium as a series of expressions concerning the nature of religious experience. The reviewer is another former student, and he feels, with the writers of these essays, that Professor Macintosh has indeed made an enduring impression on the theological thinking of America.

RANDOLPH CRUMP MILLER.

Church Divinity School of the Pacific,
Berkeley, California, U.S.A.

THE ASSISTANT MASTER SPEAKS*

This book has been produced on very similar lines to those of its two predecessors (*The Head Master Speaks*, and *The Head Mistress Speaks*), but the conditions of its birth were somewhat different. The two former volumes were the result of direct invitations to conribute, sent to carefully selected and representative head masters and mistresses. Invitations to send in essays suitable for this new venture were sent to the Common Rooms of most secondary schools in the country, with a suitable cash offer. The twelve here printed are therefore the result of selection from a presumed larger number.

The themes of the essays are many and varied. The variety is as interesting as that of the plums in a Christmas pudding. Just as an inexperienced preacher, or one who is only asked to preach an occasional sermon, tries to crowd into this one opportunity all his philosophy of life, so these authors, brimful of ideas, have tended to allow their exuberance to overflow. The result, if it makes somewhat disconnected reading, is most stimulating, entertaining, and provocative of thought.

**The Assistant Master Speaks.* By various writers. (Kegan, Paul. 7/6. 1938.)

Here are some of the subjects touched upon. The first essay opens with a discussion about the decreasing gulf between the things learned in and out of class. In the best schools the job of education never ends. Efficient teaching in class is not enough by itself. Numberless other school activities, and even the dullest jobs of supervision, are all part of the schoolmaster's life, and if they are not approached in a spirit of love, that life may well become a life sentence. One result of this changing attitude will probably be a new attitude to subjects learned in school. If the old classroom atmosphere disappears, those who have not suffered from it may be expected no longer to say of, for example, a play of Shakespeare, 'We had too much of that at school; I'm going to the pictures next Saturday night.' Perhaps, too, this may be extended to matters of religion, and we may no longer hear what we at present hear too often: 'No, I don't go to church now; I had too much of that sort of thing when I was at school'; a remark which is a dreadful condemnation of school religion.

Several writers touch on ultimate aims, though none very deeply, with the exception of the last contributor (see below). But although only this one writer sets himself the question, 'What is this school for?' many of them discuss problems only a little less fundamental. Problems of discipline, the old and the new; whether any discipline is really worth having except self-discipline; the obvious connection between matters of discipline and aesthetic surroundings; all these are vital questions. If you give boys the barest of bare walls, dirty and unplastered, and perhaps even unpainted; rickety chairs and tables to sit at or upon, and the general atmosphere of the prison rather than that of the home, they will themselves be dirty and untidy, will scribble on inviting walls, and smash the furniture and bring its life to a rapid and well-deserved close. If, on the other hand, the young are surrounded with property which is worth respecting, they will generally respect it; not always, because there will always be some whose childish first apprehension of power has not been properly tamed; but if the risk of occasional damage is taken, an immensely valuable lesson will have been learnt. Those schools which can provide studies for even the youngest of their pupils, something to learn to take a pride in, therefore offer a great attraction.

One of the best of the essays which reaches down to fundamentals is that by a house master at Oundle, who defines the object of education as the creation of a desire for truth, and with it a detestation of dogma, intolerance, and fear. (By dogma it becomes clear that he means being dogmatic and intolerant, and not strictly speaking dogma, which, after all, just means what has seemed good; but then, as Dean Inge once said, any stigma will do to beat dogma with.)

Art teaching comes in for a good deal of discussion, both direct and incidental. Perhaps in this subject more than in any other it is clear that reformation was necessary. It has already come, and the writers in this

volume are perhaps not all quite so far in the van as they might think themselves to be; but some schools still lag behind. In these days of our machine-made civilisation it is more than ever necessary that we should give some criterion to enable people to judge between what looks good in itself, and what looks cheap, tawdry, and unsuited to its purpose. It is a moral judgment that is required, too; an ability to distinguish the real from the sham, even if it is only in matters like choosing an electric fire and not buying one which makes a feeble pretence of being coal, or the necessity of not putting fire-irons in front of a gas stove. Art as now taught in all but the most reactionary schools sets itself two problems, both inter-related; the training of the imagination through the eyes, so that the pupil may begin to feel the joy of creating something which looks good in itself, and the co-ordination of the muscles of hand and body with the ideas of the brain. On these principles the youngest children can produce work which is good both in itself, and as leading to something better still in the future.

An entertaining essay, written possibly with less seriousness than might appear at first sight, concerns the lack of social status of the school master. There are plenty of faults of character to which the school master is subject more than most people. A tendency to be dictatorial is not least among them. Then there is the slight feeling of discomfort experienced by people in the presence of one whose job it is to know more than they know. Someone was once asked by a schoolmaster why he had this uncomfortable feeling; the reply was, 'Because you beat little boys.' This is certainly an undignified proceeding, and warrants a certain disgust. And the old gibe about a schoolmaster being a man among boys and a boy among men, is, alas, sometimes still true. The remedy, of course, lies with the individual. If he is a person of limited interests and closed mind, he will find it easiest to get on with those to whom he is in a position to dictate. If on the other hand he has managed to maintain, in spite of many temptations to forsake it, something of his early idealism and enthusiasm, he will be fit company for his peers in other walks of life. Nor is it only the schoolmaster who suffers from this feeling of inferiority. Who does not feel a certain apprehensiveness when he meets a doctor in a social way, and not in the course of consulting-room business? Or, in a different walk of life, we know that the policeman's lot is not a happy one.

The amount of training necessary for a schoolmaster is also discussed. On the face of it, it would seem that some form of training would be essential, if the dignity and responsibility of the profession are to be kept up. We are up against the obstinate fact that most successful teachers have had no training, and many bad ones have been through the prescribed course. Certainly the most valuable part of the course in education provided by the older universities is the term which is spent away from the university itself, doing the job of teaching under supervision. The wicked

story is told of a young man who came on such a term's training to one of our greater Public Schools, and was a great success; so great a success, indeed, that the school offered him a job when he had finished his year's training. He returned to his university, sat for his diploma, and failed to get it. The school, however, still offered him the job, and he is now one of the most successful masters on its staff.

Ought schoolmasters to be married or single? There is always a certain lopsidedness in a bachelor; the married man's danger is that of apathy and mental lethargy. After all, there are only twenty-four hours in a day, and he wants to devote some of them to his family duties. Further problems are, inevitably, examinations; there is hardly a good word to be said for them by these authors; handicrafts in the VIth form; and the need for catering for boys who have passed their School Certificate but are not going on to a university.

Much the most interesting essay in this very interesting collection is the last, on 'The Menace of Paganism.' Its author touches fundamentals as few of the others do. This essay at once invites comparison with the former book, *The Head Master Speaks*. All the head masters assumed Christianity as a necessary background, and most of them assumed that if the Christian life were truly lived, the educational ideal would have been attained. This is by no means the assumption of these assistant masters, except this last contributor. We are faced with the fact that all the liberal feeling, the desire for progress, the enthusiasm, is with the young, to whom Christianity rarely seems to be a serious issue. Does this mean that all the hide-bound traditionalists are Christians, and no one else? What will happen when these young men (because youth is an obvious characteristic of the book) themselves become head masters? There is the depressing fact of getting old to be taken into consideration; will they become traditionalists too, and give up these attempts to think things out for themselves? And, lastly, must all the liberalism and desire for progress be with the people to whom Christianity means little? When are we going to show them that Christianity, of which they seem to know so little, is itself a living religion, and still has the Holy Spirit of God who is Truth working within it?

W. H. OLDAKER.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of *The Modern Churchman*

SIR,

REFUGEES AND MODERN CHURCHMEN.

At the Conference of the Modern Churchmen's Union last September, the Conference Secretary was good enough to allow my sister to post on the notice board an appeal on behalf of two little children, exiles from Vienna. Members of the Conference will be glad to hear that, arising from this appeal, a member of the Conference has most generously made it

possible for the children (Karl and Irene Vermes) to remain at a residential nursery school, where they are well and happy. Their father, after ten days in England, was able to sail for South America, where he hopes in due course to rebuild the family fortunes. Frau Vermes has obtained a resident post in England, and though it is not yet possible for her to have the children with her, she contributes regularly to their support. Both parents appreciate warmly the arrangements made for the children.

Arising out of the same appeal, several other members of the Conference have been good enough to give practical help to Viennese families with whom I have been in touch. Refugee children are living in the homes of members of the Conference in Birmingham and in Derby. Another member offered hospitality to a whole family, and although in the end American visas were obtained and the family did not come to this country, they wrote that this offer alone had saved them from despair.

No doubt, many members of the Modern Churchmen's Union are actively engaged in work on behalf of refugees. Among others, perhaps I may mention that the Rev. J. R. C. Webb is Honorary Secretary of the recently formed Refugee Committee in Derby, which is representative of both Christian and Jewish bodies in that neighbourhood. Again, readers will undoubtedly be in touch with one or other of the many groups who are rendering assistance to exiles in these tragic months, but if in any instance they wish for suggestions as to families requiring help, I shall be glad at any time to send suitable names, and also to receive donations for individual cases.

May I take this opportunity to express my thanks for the generous help, in time, energy and money, which has already been given.

ANNE ASHLEY
(*Secretary, Council of Social Service, Edinburgh*).

22 India Street, Edinburgh.
January 1st, 1939.

SIR,

THE HOUSE FOR JEWS AT CLIFTON COLLEGE.

May I suggest a slight correction in the letter of the former Dean of Peterborough in your December issue. He writes of Claude Montefiore: 'There was not then available what (Canon) Glazebrook started later at Clifton—a house for Jews.' There was a house for Jews which I was at school at Clifton, which was before Canon Glazebrook came to Clifton. His period as headmaster was January, 1891, to July, 1905. I understand that the house for Jews was started at Clifton in 1878 towards the close of the time that Dr. Percival was headmaster.

OSWALD YOUNGHUSBAND.

8 Gloucester Row, Clifton, Bristol.

[Dean Page himself has also written to this effect.—ED., *M.C.*]

SIR,

PRAYER BOOK REVISION.

Miss Rosa C. Vine, in her letter in the November *Modern Churchman*, draws attention to a very much needed reform of the Prayer Book as regards the language used.

If the Lord's Prayer is our pattern, then we certainly are not right in so often 'beseeching,' as she says, 'an apparently reluctant God to have mercy upon us' and to 'spare' us, and the repetition of such responses is

likely to give those using them an entirely wrong idea of what their attitude to God should be.

Personally, like your correspondent, I always mentally alter such words into an affirmation, but this ought not to be necessary. I remember at some Guild of Health Intercession Services in Bradford Cathedral many years ago the clergyman after each intercession said, 'Lord, Thou hast heard our prayer,' to which the congregation responded, 'And our cry has come unto Thee.' Such affirmation and those suggested by Miss Vine seem to me not only more in accordance with modern psychology than the usual responses, but agree with the childlike trust which is the keynote of the Lord's Prayer. And, after all, our Lord was *the* Psychologist.

Even our Prayer Book, to do it justice, in one of its many fine moments, reminds us that God is always more ready to hear than we to pray and is wont to give more than either we desire or deserve, which goes to show what a mixture that Prayer Book is.

If words and phrases which express cringing slavishness rather than frank trust, and are, therefore, not in accordance with the Lord's Prayer, were omitted, as well as the imprecations in the Psalms and the Commination Service and some parts of the Creeds, the cause of real religion would, I am sure, be served.

It would help, too, if incorrect translations, as in the *Te Deum,* could be amended. The Prayer Book ending of this, 'In Thee have I trusted; let me never be confounded,' strikes a false note, while the correct translation, 'In Thee have I trusted; I shall never be confounded,' is just right and a beautiful conclusion to a noble hymn.

E. E. HART.

10 Roydstone Road, Bradford, Yorkshire.
January 9th, 1939.

THE M.C.U. COUNCIL ELECTION, 1939.

SIR,

I shall be glad if you will kindly give publicity to the following official notice to members of the Modern Churchmen's Union.

By the Constitution the following elected members of the Council retire on the day of the Annual Meeting in May, 1939, and are not eligible for re-election, *viz.*: — Miss E. M. Beaumont, Rev. J. S. Boys-Smith, Rev. R. G. Griffith, Mr. R. B. Henderson, Rev. H. P. Kingdon, Rev. Gamaliel Milner and Canon R. D. Richardson.

The following co-opted members of the Council retire at the same time, but are eligible for re-election, *viz.*: — Canon J. S. Bezzant, Dr. G. W. Butterworth, Rev. A. G. Coombs, Rev. L. B. Cross, Rev. R. G. Jackson, Canon W. H. Mackean, Rev. F. I. L. Rees and Rev. A. H. Streeten.

All other members of the Council whose names are in the list published in the magazine continue to serve.

Ten members are to be elected to the Council this year, and the nominations of candidates must reach the Secretary not later than March 1st. The names must be proposed and seconded by members of the Union, and the consent of the nominee should first be obtained. Any member may nominate one or more (up to four) candidates for election.

If more than ten nominations are received, voting papers will be sent to all members of the Union.

T. J. WOOD,
Organising Secretary.